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PUNCH

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No. 5868



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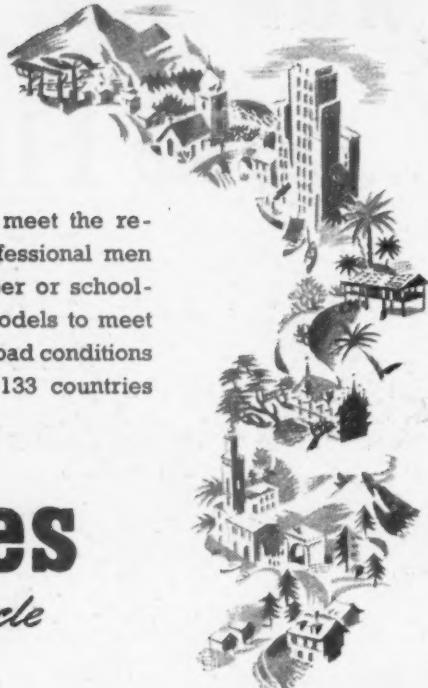
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[PNN 81]

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Or manage a Bank or a racing stable. Anyway, he's wearing a Maenson suit — there's no mystery about that.

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from a man who
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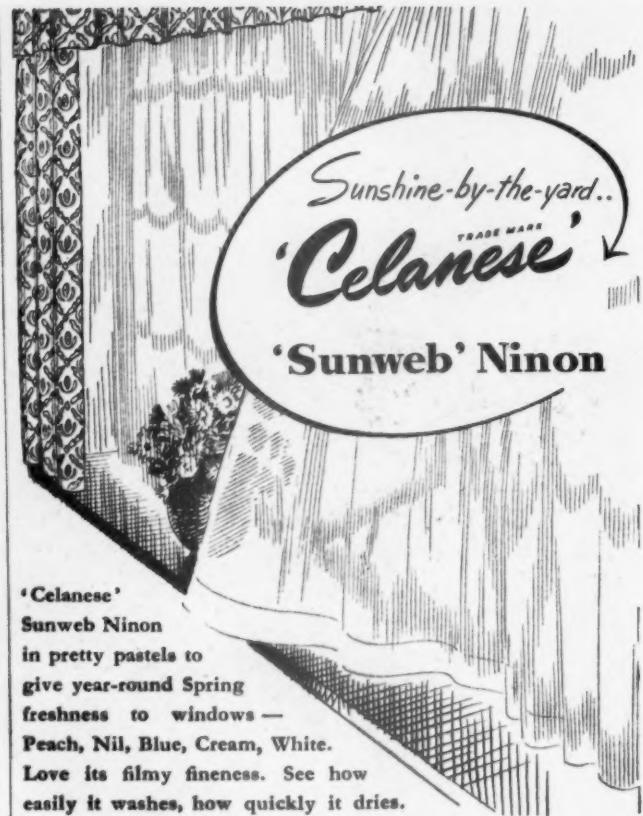
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Quality
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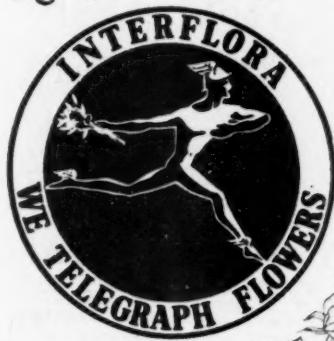
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DIVERS DESCEND—
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Tenova

socks

(the comfort's in
the cut-out)

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reinforced
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"Oh no, sir.
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essential to have handy an
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Lessen fire risks - instal an
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ALLWAYS
FIRE
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Just because a racy customer wanted
Accles & Pollock to make a tubular steel horse



riding whip the Directors acquired a really loathsome habit
turning up at 8 o'clock
in the morning we were unfortunately too late to see them getting on
their high horses upstairs in the office



people were on the carpet
busy laying the odds at ten to two against all expectations



both Directors came off simultaneously
it was agreed to



carry them unanimously in to lunch
a fine photo finish shows everybody
cheering as you would expect
the tubular steel riding whips
definitely came off best
and Accles & Pollock's colours (bruise blue shot
with red) are now firmly nailed to their
tubular steel mast



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one-blade safety

THE ROLLS RAZOR with heavy, hollow-ground blade, honed and strapped in its case, gives year after year of shaving luxury, free from the constant expense of new blades. Real economy and perfect shaving — always! Price 49/9d. complete or, in Leather Pouch Set with spare blade, 76/7d.

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VICEROY DRY SHAVERS. The luxurious solution to every shaving problem. Guaranteed for two years. The "Twin-Four" with extra wide shaving surfaces and precision-cut multiple heads ensures speedy, silky-smooth shaves all the time . . . every time. Wide voltage range (A.C./D.C. 90-250v.). Price, in magnificent silk and velvet lined case, 160/-. Other Viceroys are the "Universal" model (A.C./D.C. 90-250v.) 119/6d., the "A.C." model (200-250v.) 99/6d., and the "Non-Electric" model (hand-operated) 99/6d.

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Glayva

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it's not only the cut of a Daks suit...

it's the cloth!



When men buy Daks — trousers or suits — they do so for the celebrated Daks features. Comfort-in-action design. A style of tailoring uncannily right. But do they realise that half the appeal of Daks is in the **cloth!**

look at it!... that depth and richness of colour and pattern have been 'dyed in the wool'.

handle it!... that soft 'kindly' feel is the result of nearly forty processes.

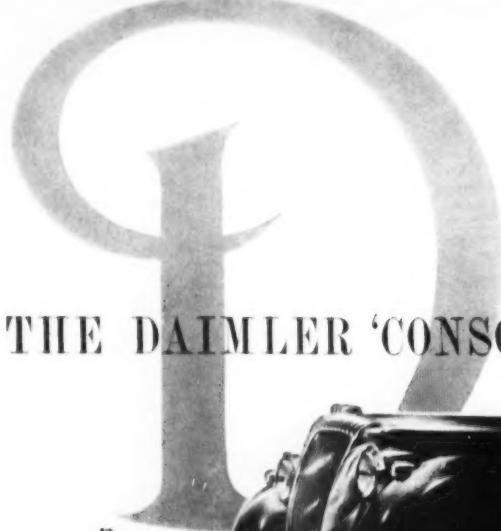
wear it!... and see how, without sag or fault, year after year, it keeps its shape, thanks to its construction and its two-fold warp and weft.

Praise the cutter, if you like, for Daks. But give a big hand as well to the master-craftsmen who make the cloth that's fine enough for Daks!





Painted by THEYRE LEE-ELLIOTT for The Daimler Company



Grace of movement, masterly technique that captures the very spirit of the dance . . . such qualities we admire in the ballerina's art. The 'Consort', too, we praise for its mastery of motion. Built to the exacting Daimler standards of luxury and elegance, it is the most pleasant and restful of cars to drive at speed, yet at the same time surprisingly agile in traffic. For the man with a position to keep up, for the firm with its prestige to consider, the Daimler 'Consort' is the perfect choice . . . a car to be proud of for years to come.

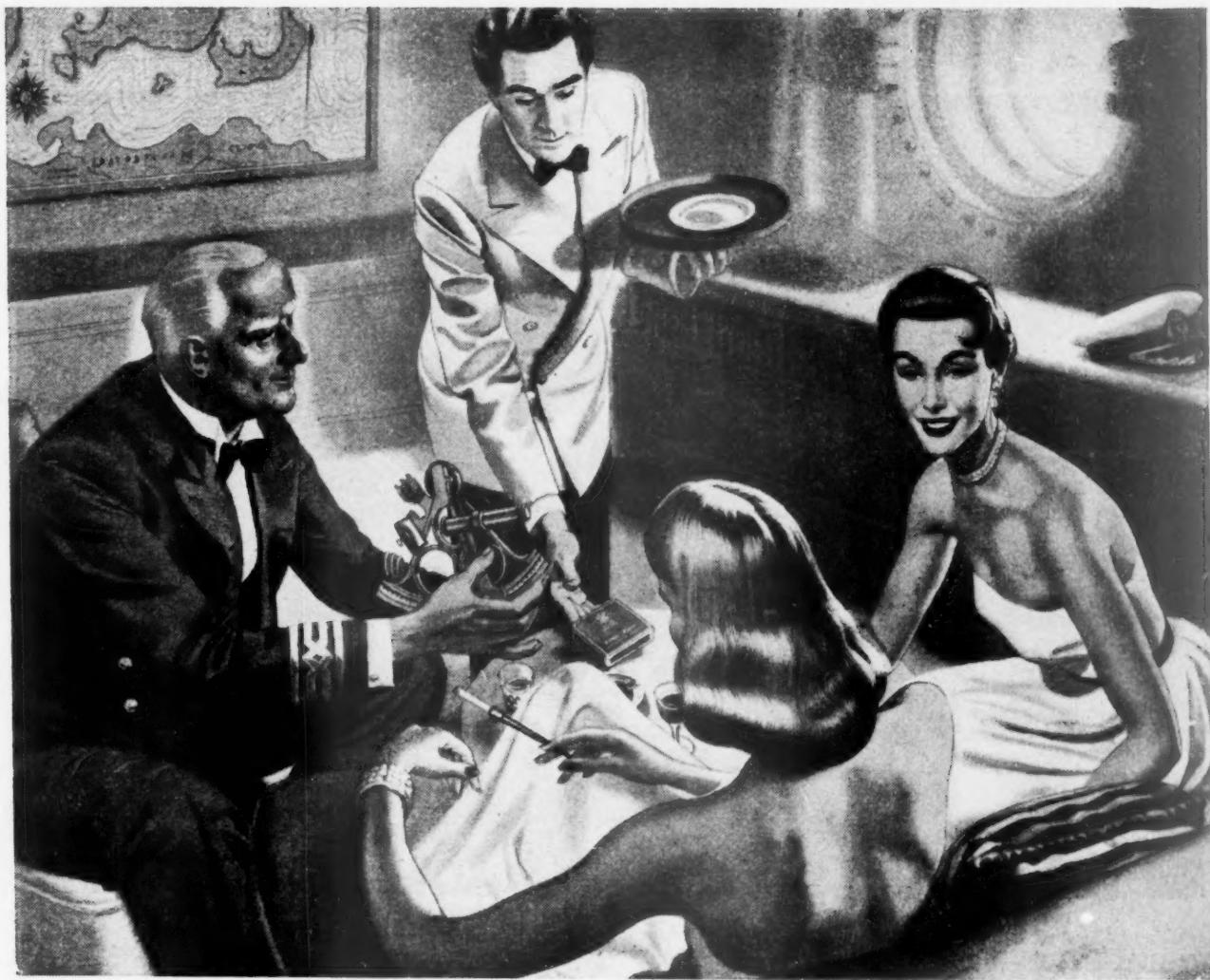
THE DAIMLER 'CONSORT'



BY APPOINTMENT
The Daimler Co. Limited
Motor Car Manufacturers
To the Late King George VI

THE 2½-LITRE 'CONSORT' SALOON

D100



"You asked for Benson & Hedges cigarettes, Sir"

Benson & Hedges are proud to announce that their Super Virginia Cigarettes are available on the world's most famous liners, including the following great ships:—

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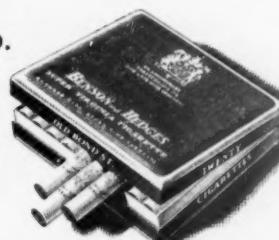
Those who travel widely, for business or for pleasure, must have observed how frequently

BENSON and HEDGES Super Virginia cigarettes, made from the finest of fine tobaccos, are called for to distinguish any special occasion when only the best will do.



BY APPOINTMENT
TOBACCONISTS TO
THE LATE KING GEORGE VI

When only the best will do



© 1953 B&H

TIME IS THE ART OF THE SWISS



People have odd ideas about him!

THE Swiss watch-craftsman is a proud man. Proud of eyes and fingers trained till they're exact as a surgeon's.

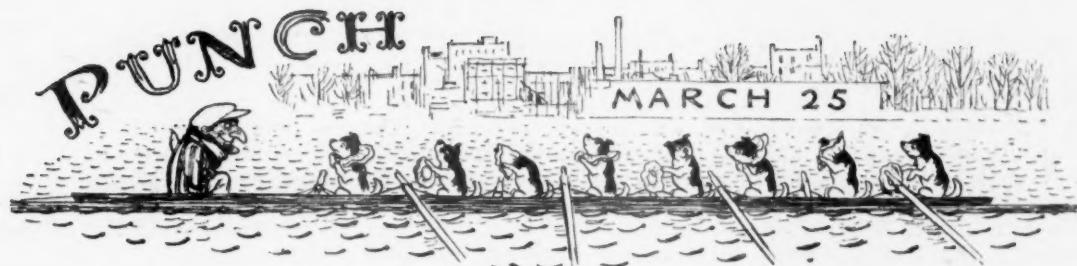
But if you think all craftsmen cling to old methods—the man who makes the good Swiss jewelled-lever watch would be amused. At his fingertips he has an old inherited skill—but at his elbow, the latest precision-tools. Modern science, modern technology, modern production methods help him all day, every day. He's as proud of his equipment as of his skill.

How can you judge his work—and choose a watch wisely? Only with expert help, of course. Your jeweller is the only man to tell you why one watch is a "better buy" than another. To give you full choice from the latest types. To guarantee a new watch in perfect condition. To give you perfect service in years to come. For he's a qualified specialist with the resources of the Swiss watch industry behind him.

Your jeweller's knowledge is your safeguard

The WATCHMAKERS  *OF SWITZERLAND*





CHARIVARIA

THOUGH last week's sensational overlappings of art and politics have caused a good deal of spirited controversy among students of both, the fog of dissen-

sion is now thinning a little. On the whole, weight of public opinion seems to support the forty-three M.P.s and their motion of protest. Who after all, wants a thing like that on the Cliffs of Dover?



for example, in the *Bournemouth Daily Echo* advertisement with the headline, "A Portrait of Your Loved One Executed in Coronation Year."

Judging from the spate of Sunday paper articles revealing the alarming scale on which, during the second world war, secret agents from each side penetrated into the highest councils of the other, one way of easing the financial burden of any future conflict might be for the belligerents to pool information from the start.

The public will have itself to blame if it is presently left gasping above the tide-mark of world events. It can only be to satisfy the popular news-lust that the *Daily Mirror*, as reported in *World's Press News* recently, is now on sale in London at eight o'clock on the night before publication date. But this makes it a threat to London's evening papers proper; these, already doing splendidly for readers by appearing at ten in the morning, must now do better still by coming out on the previous evening. So far, so good. But how long will the (*Evening*) *Mirror* stand for that? It will undoubtedly strain every resource to advance its

appearance still further, to the morning, instead of the evening, of the day before its avowed date—a move which will naturally spur the evening papers to . . . However, the pattern is clear. The impatient public, for whose benefit this game of reversed leapfrog down the middle of Fleet Street will be played, are in the end going to get nothing more up-to-the-minute than three-halfpenn'orth of last week's news dated the week after next.

Black Man Gets White Man Heap Confused

"The upshot of the correspondence in *The Times* on Central African federation is clear and important. Undoubtedly there is a majority of British opinion in favour of federation . . ."

The Times

"The strength of the opposition to federation has been clearly shown by the important correspondence that has been appearing in *The Times*. This correspondence—which we trust will not be . . ."—*The Observer*

Considerable relief is felt in the B.B.C. at the arrangements finally settled for the broadcasting of Saturday's steeplechase. Members of the Drama Department had never been really sanguine about the proposal to put out a substitute programme, if necessary, giving a hurdle-by-hurdle account of the negotiations with Mrs. Topham.



Engine tests now being conducted in the Wyre Forest, Worcestershire, to determine the thrust, pressure and temperature of a new supersonic rocket have caused some concern in the adjacent village of Button Oak. It is felt locally that even an assurance by the authorities that "there is no possibility of the rockets being projected into the air" fails to cover all contingencies.

AN AIRCRAFT CALLED DEMOCRACY

NUMBER 374, a bewildered, awkward, nondescript lump of a man from the backwoods of muddiest Mecklenburg, who by God knows what access of despair and resolution had been moved to uproot himself and come to West Berlin with his wife and two children in search of an Aircraft called Democracy, turned out to be a "bad" refugee. I feared as much when it took him about two minutes to answer to his number. A "good" refugee would have fought his way through the dank-smelling mob in the narrow corridor outside so as to be on the spot the moment his turn came.

But at least he had his Soviet Zone identity card and labour book. The West Berlin refugee department official noted with approval, with a strictly non-political deference for correct procedure, that all the entries were duly attested by sinister black Soviet Zone stamps: "Polizei Praesidium, Klein Dingsda." But he frowned at the last entry in the labour book.

"So you were employed as a casual labourer. Were you dismissed? No entry about it here. What made you give up a good job and come across as a refugee?"

I winced as I realized that 374, in the supreme moment of his life, was about to tell the simple, unavailing and utterly irrelevant truth. I wanted to whisper to him: "Say they were trying to force you to join the Communist railway police. Then your dwelling-block spy caught you red-handed listening to Western radio. Then your second cousin, who is a People's Policeman, tipped you off that they were coming to arrest you. Just fill in some safe names, dates and places, and with luck you'll be all right."

But No. 374 thought of none of these things. He just told the straightforward undramatic tale of how he and his wife got so sick of semi-starvation and the Communist régime that they decided to clear out. This obviously wasn't good enough to qualify him for "official recognition" as one who had genuinely sought asylum "because of danger to life or freedom, or for other compelling reasons."

The official told him he had practically no chance, and he shuffled out, clutching a chit for two more weeks at a camp. The democratic freedom he had left all his worldly possessions to embrace, taking considerable risks of arrest in the process, would amount to an interminable limbo existence with about 200,000 other "unrecognized," black refugees and expellees, with no home, no work, and no prospect other than living



on his wits. These, in the case of No. 374, would not get him far against the competition he would encounter on the neon-lighted sidewalks of Berlin.

"That's what we have to contend with," said the official. "His only reason for coming over here was that he thought he would be better off."

No. 375 was an even worse refugee. He had made a whole series of mistakes, beginning with speaking against the Communists at a factory meeting and ending with punching an activist brigadier on the nose. He had, furthermore, no written proof even of these slender qualifications for refugeehood. He should have got it all recorded by the Secret Police to make things easier for the West Berlin refugee department.

"What made you think you were going to get into trouble?"

"The other chaps at the factory said so."

"Nonsense! What else can you expect if you go on making yourself conspicuous and quarrelling?"

"I hate the place. I hate the Communists. I want to be a free man."

"Other people put up with it and keep their mouths shut. Why can't you?"

No. 375 went out, perplexed but still trusting in the justice of his cause. The official shook his head. "A shiftless, uncontrolled type that never settles down."

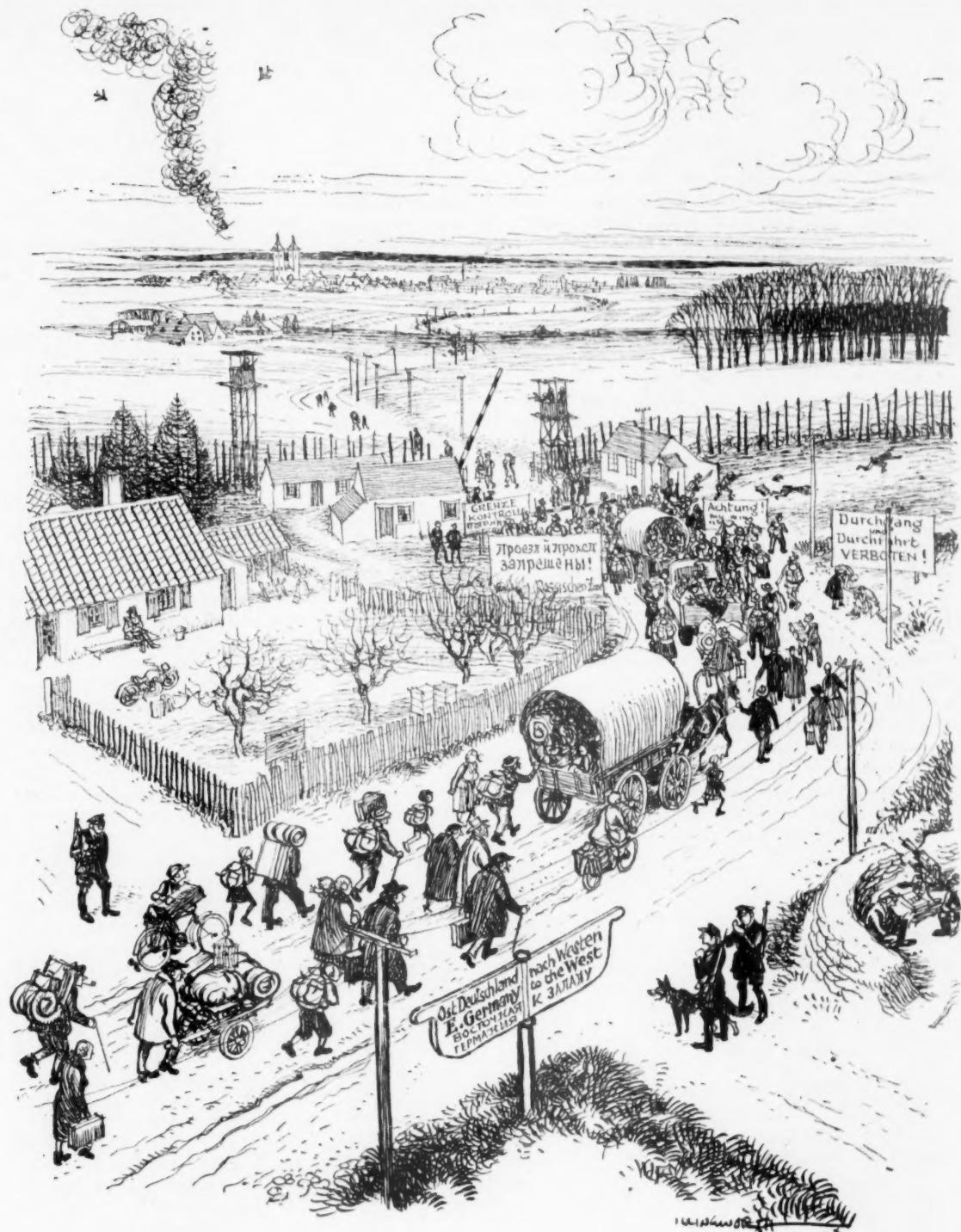
No. 376 was a "good" refugee. He was a young man, a metal worker, and had been dismissed from a State factory because all men under twenty-five had been declared redundant in order to force them to volunteer for the People's Police.

Could he prove it? Out came his identity card and labour book, recording that his conduct had been exemplary, regretting that hard necessity had left no other choice than to dismiss so excellent a man, and lovely fat Communist Polizei stamps on every line. Furthermore, he had an uncle in business in Hamburg. The official beamed. "That is a good straightforward case. He will have no difficulty."

Actually about 75 per cent of all applicants are accepted, and it is intended to relax the standards further to bring the percentage up to about 85. This does not include people with criminal records, who are automatically excluded.

The West German Government, who insist on the "recognition" procedure, say it is a necessary barrier without which untold thousands would stream into Western Germany via West Berlin. The officials, harassed and overworked, do their weeding-out with all possible humanity and kindness in the circumstances. But every day about four hundred of those who struggle across from Communism to Democracy are denied the chance of making a fresh start, difficult and laborious as this is even for the lucky ones. They are the cold-war casualties, to whom the Western world extends an equally cold charity, but for whom it will not accept responsibility.

R. H. C. S.



"The Soviet Government consider that the most correct, essential and just foreign policy is a policy of peace among all peoples." —G. Malenkov

NO PICNIC FOR P.C. 1250

To: The Chief Supt.
From: P.C. 1250

SIR,—Re Press headlines, P.C. and Woman Spent £95 at Club, I venture a word sticking up for a Constable on this class of duty, having personally had a recent basinful, with respect, and not yet myself as a result. Sir, who is on trial, that's all I say! You have to read these reports right down the bottom to find the Accused successfully muled, and the Constable made out a playboy right and left.

First I hear is the Super sends for me when I come off the beat dinner time Monday and proceeds to mention a Special Job in recognition of good work done (forty-one motorists that week booked for yellow parking, and the barrow-boys well shuffled round at rear of Leicester Sq.). Naturally I think of some Coronation Plum such as crowd control, something after that class of duty, and it was a shaker when he comes out with this other, which is not my cup of char at all as we say in the Station canteen, pardon the phrase. (No error, there's plenty of educated constables in the Division, Hendon and that, well up in West End ways and calling

Waitah, and the like. Why me, as I told Super?)

Further (1) I have never frequented a night club, short of once apprehending a gent therein after illicitly driving the length of a One-Way, and (2) am not in possession of evening wear, known to be obligatory at the Haunt named, and (3) have no experience of working jointly with a W.P.C., and (4) and lastly, did not join the Force to indulge in flesh-pots at taxpayers' expense. These points when put Super overrules, stating a Constable goes where sent and does what told. As to evening wear, a set for duty use was kept hanging inside the door of the Felonious Entry cupboard which only wanted a brush and as good as new. As to W.P.C. Merribole, my assigned oppo, she was an experienced officer and would not let down the Force.

I therefore saluted and retired to the Constables' Room, there received with winks and such remarks as Who was that lady I seen you with last night, etc., only proving a foretaste of Press headlines and false public attitude in general.

Sir, I do not wish to criticize W.P.C. Merribole, as this officer seems well qualified and knows her



Judges' Rules and the Caution flawless, with more wind on a whistle than many a male constable, let alone being a well-made young woman with long red nails and a hair-do like a pile of gold rope, but when we step from the Rolls, her covered in jewels and me in the Station evening wear with the waistcoat gusseted ad hoc, and she states, Go ahead while I powder Darling, mine's a large Martini, I have bodings of a heavy assignment. W.P.C. Merribole is in the Case very whole-hearted.

It does not seem proper to me to take alcohol until after the Permitted Hours, our objective being to ascertain if this is what goes on, but the W.P.C. pooh-poohs, stating it would look fishy to suddenly start on intoxicating liquor on the stroke of 3 A.M. after all night on minerals, etc., and orders champagne, Chateau Veuve and the like on a festal scale, also some type of whole small bird each at fifty shillings odd, which was only the commencement.

Now, sir, I am not an eater or drinker of any status, and the pace of this assignment was all that my sense of duty could keep up with, so that what with the wine and the music, particularly the violinist playing over my plate while I salved my conscience by expounding the Identity Parade irregularities in



the case of Oscar Slater, and coffee and liqueurs to follow, I regret I do not remember the latter portion of my first tour of duty, being woken up by the W.P.C. outside my lodgings in Epping Street, E., with a request for two pounds to pay the driver. It appears, unfortunately, we have left with our Case uncompleted, it being not yet 3 A.M. when W.P.C. Merribile and the head-waiter assisted me from the scene of the (alleged) crime.

Well, sir, there are officers who, feeling as I felt next dinner time, would have requested removal from the Case, but as we are taught at Peel House, police work is not a thing of glamour and excitement like in books, but mostly just patient dogged slogging, and I therefore prevailed on myself to

discharge three more gruelling tours of duty of this type, eating and drinking with no thought for personal danger, you might say, and showing courage and determination beyond the call of duty by dancing extensively on the last two tours, W.P.C. Merribile stating this would serve to avoid suspicion. In the small hours of the Friday, aided by self discipline and very painful feet owing to tightness of Station pumps, I finally succeeded in retaining consciousness until my police watch showed 3 A.M., and was able to utter the words Two Large Whiskies. These arriving at 3.3 A.M. precisely, Case was complete and the W.P.C. showed her warrant-card and took appropriate action. My work concluded, Nature stepped in and I collapsed at 3.5 A.M.

Well, sir, as I am now convalescent and shall soon be back with my fellow-constables, I would respectfully ask this report to be embodied in the next Divisional Circular, making the nature of such assignments clear to all. Also I would urgently request being struck off the roll for duties of this type, with a preference stated for Warehouse Roof jobs, Mad Axe slayers, something after that class of thing.

Hoping this finds you, etc.,
(P.C.) J. B. BOOTHROYD (1250)

2 2

"Mr. White said that local government extravagance and increased rats had hit traders hard in many towns."

Gloucestershire Echo

Hamelin, for one.



"They all called for Horace to go out and play, but I'm keeping him in for bad behaviour."



The Things They Said About Tito

THE late Doctor Goebbels was fond of referring to the Press and Radio of the Third Reich as an orchestra, with, of course, himself as conductor. Even when there is no ostensible conductor, the image retains a certain validity, as witness, for instance, the handling by the British Press and the B.B.C. of Marshal Tito's recent visit to this country.

The heavy brass of Printing House Square, Peterborough Court and Cross Street, reinforced by woodwind from Tudor Street and Gray's Inn Road; the drums, cymbals and triangles in Portland Place, with descriptive writers, special reporters, diplomatic correspondents and photographers weighing in like occasional string instruments, not to mention the shrill piccolo notes of the gossip paragraphs—the effect was decidedly orchestral.

There were, it is true, variations on the main theme. *The Times*, as is its way, expounded the proposition that "there is more freedom in Yugoslavia to-day, in fact as in theory, than there was five years ago, and . . . there are signs that this freedom is being extended in some ways in the religious sphere," while expressing the hope that Marshal Tito's visit would make clear to him "the British people's profound hope that he will continue along this path." The *Manchester Guardian*, as is its way, pointed out that the Tito régime "does not claim to be based on free institutions as we understand them (or on what Marshal Tito at the November Congress of the Yugoslav Communist Party called 'obsolete ideas from the West')." "The drawback of these dramatic encounters between the leaders of the nations," it was concluded, "is that they tend to put an emotional gloss—perhaps specious—on the normal processes of diplomacy."

The *Daily Telegraph* derived comfort from the reflection that, though Tito was indubitably a Communist, he "is a national Communist," and went on to recall that "when Mr. Churchill greeted Stalin as an ally in 1941, no voice was raised in protest, though every criticism that is now made of Marshal Tito could then have been applied with even greater force to Stalin."

Beneath this surface of relative unanimity, however, there were currents of discord. The score was Stravinsky rather than Strauss. In particular, clerical circles were in a state of considerable perturbation. In his letter to the York Diocese for March, the Archbishop of York attempted to reassure his troubled flock by suggesting to them that "a welcome to Marshal Tito . . . would not imply approval of his

religious, social or economic views and policies." He referred to Tito as "a brave man, the head of a 'sturdy, hard-working peasant community.'" With a logic not easy to follow, the Archbishop went on to contend that there was little point in condemning Tito's persecution of the Roman Catholic Church since "during the Italian-German occupation of his country there was severe persecution of the Greek Orthodox Christians by the Roman Catholics."

The Vatican radio retaliated by expressing the fear that, as Tito's visit "goes beyond simply political contacts," a "strengthening of the régime of persecution (in Yugoslavia) will result from the visit." A like theme was taken up by such publications as the *Catholic Times*, the *Universe* and the *Catholic Herald*, with the *Tablet* following along, as befits its superior intellectual status, at a more sedate pace. "Strategically," wrote the *Catholic Times*, "Tito is in a powerful position, and he is exploiting it to the full. But what is the West going to do about his rejection of the Four Freedoms?"

The note behind the Iron Curtain was well conveyed in a broadcast from Budapest. "Tito," it ran, "will enter the Palace smart as a cockatoo and manly as a hyena. The Queen of England will smile at him with all the melancholy of a withering world empire, and Tito will hand her a medal with his blood-stained hands." This scene was a Budapest exclusive, though the *Daily Worker* did its best to maintain the same standard. It was first in the field with a disclosure that Tito was staying at White Lodge in Richmond Park (a "large white tree-shadowed house, formerly a residence of the Royal Family"), and mentioned with indignation that "any ordinary British citizen who thinks he has a right to stroll where he pleases in Richmond Park during Tito's visit will soon find that his privileges are rather less than those of the Yugoslav dictator."

"Most extraordinary of all," reported a *Daily Worker* representative who had tried to penetrate White Lodge, "an invalid carriage stood at a vantage point. In this lay, self-consciously, a remarkably lusty and healthy-looking man, a regulation raincoat half concealed by his blanket. Leaning forward, he gave us a short and hostile scrutiny."

The *New Statesman and Nation* hoped that "the

police cordons with public ceremonies have not disguised from Tito that he is genuinely welcomed by a large part of the British public." "British workers," the *New Statesman* went on, ". . . see in impoverished Yugoslavia an effort . . . to build a form of Socialism in a relatively free atmosphere." It is interesting to compare this attitude with past pronouncements on the same subject. The first reaction to Tito's expulsion from the Cominform was characterized by a very typical forced facetiousness. The Cominform had referred to Tito's "shameful, purely Turkish terrorist régime." "The exquisite irony," the *New Statesman* wrote at the time, "of Moscow finding something shameful and Turkish in political arrests will not be lost on many people in East Europe, though we fear they will not risk a Turkish revenge by indulging in any public ribaldry." By the next issue (July 10, 1948) an editorial deduced from "the more responsible organs of Communist opinion in East Europe" that "the Yugoslavs . . . would pay quiet heed to many of the Cominform strictures where this can be done without admitting guilt." "An intervention by Stalin, combined with judicious purges in Moscow and Belgrade," might yet conceivably patch things up.

After two more issues, Critic (generally assumed to be Mr. Kingsley Martin himself) concluded rather sadly that "the whole issue between the Cominform and the Yugoslav Communist Party, or rather its leadership, is in some ways so esoteric as to be beyond the comprehension of a simple Western Socialist like myself." Matters became slightly clearer when Miss Doreen Warriner, in a dispatch from Belgrade, remarked apropos the possibility of Tito turning to the West for trade and aid: "There is no likelihood of any really decisive move and if any such were ever contemplated, it is certainly abandoned now."

It remained for a "Yugoslav correspondent" to round things off. "In other satellite States," he wrote, the Communist Parties were "in process of being purged of their uncertain 'band-wagoners.'" In Yugoslavia the Party was being "purged not of, but by, its 'half-baked' membership." This unhappily meant that "the broad movement of the Yugoslav peoples towards democracy seems temporarily, and perhaps fatally, interrupted." Tito would henceforth have no recourse but to rely on police terrorism, so that "the incidents will grow in number, the arrests will continue and discontent will bank up, until one day, and no doubt when least expected . . . the explosion will come."

The photographers, as usual, played their part with energy and acumen. One of their efforts, reproduced in the *Daily Express*, showed Tito "in navy blue uniform, concentrating, eyes shut." Another, in the *Daily Mail*, presented him "immaculate in his Marshal's uniform, brushing cigar ash from Mr. Churchill's lapel as they talk things over in No. 10 Downing Street." The same gesture in the same picture in the *Daily Express* was more generally described as simply "gesticulatory."



"Heigh-bo! — another Parents' Day over."

It was interesting to learn, in this connection, that "as Tito (arrowed) stood with England in sight, at the rail of his ship *Galeb*, *Daily Express* photographer Stanley Sherman was flying low overhead." Among the minutiae of the occasion which well deserve mention was the fact, disclosed by Miss Eileen Travis, that Tito's tails were "fitted on a live dummy," since the Marshal is "too impatient to stand long for fittings, but insistent on perfection." The dummy in question was, it appears, a "lieutenant-colonel and ex-partisan," who was also fitted. There is, Miss Travis says, "one slight variation to the conventional pattern." A "special pocket" was "sewn into the suit—to hold a revolver."

Another curious disclosure was that Tito liked reciting Edward Lear's "The Owl and the Pussy-Cat." Those who heard his broadcast will realize what an uproarious performance the recitation must be. There is also the fact, reported in the *Sunday Dispatch*, that Tito's kindly sentiments towards this country originated not, as commonly supposed, in the quarrel with the Kremlin, but in a visit he paid to a British book exhibition in Belgrade. On that occasion, "the Marshal was followed by a long crocodile of followers, who stopped when he stopped. The longest queue was at one particular stall that seemed to hold the iron man's deep interest; when he passed on he took a few books with him." Subsequent investigation of the books which had so held the Marshal's attention showed them to be "Beatrix Potter's charming little stories about Peter Rabbit and Jemima Puddleduck." One would like to think that Tito acquired these volumes under the impression that they were by Beatrice Webb née Potter. If so, what a fortunate man to escape the *History of Trade Unionism and Soviet Communism: A New Civilization*, in favour of Peter Rabbit.

MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE



THE MAN WITH IDEAS

KAFKA himself, whose slightly puzzled spirit broods over the Tate at present, could not have improved on this dialogue between Mr. Bertram Reece, the Bow Street magistrate, and Detective-sergeant Lisney, when poor Mr. Laslo Szilvassy was first brought up on a charge of "wilfully damaging a wire and stone sculpture monument to an unknown political prisoner":

The Magistrate. Is this a matter for a medical report?

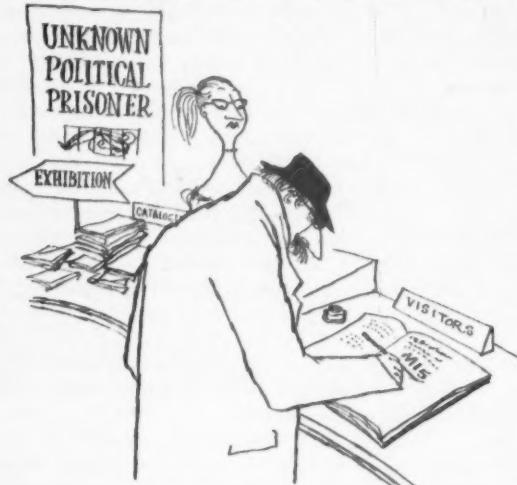
Sergeant Lisney. I was going to suggest that he has some ideas.

If it comes to that, Kafka could hardly have improved on the charge. Nor could Lewis Carroll.

Mr. Reg Butler, sculptor of the damaged monument, seemed to have an instinctive understanding of Mr. Szilvassy's alleged ideas. "You take about a shilling's worth of wire," Mr. Butler is reported in *The Times* as saying, "and bend it about in a certain way, and it becomes a symbol powerful enough to make someone want to destroy it." Was Mr. Butler taking too much for granted, perhaps? What was in Mr. Szilvassy's mind we may never know; but when confronted with a shilling's worth of wire bent into the form of a symbolic unknown political prisoner, many a citizen might feel an overpowering desire, not so much to destroy it as to know what symbol it would represent if it were re-bent into a different shape or turned upside-down and hung from the ceiling, and if it would then still be powerful enough to win a prize of four thousand five hundred and twenty-five pounds in an international competition.

As a matter of fact there is no reason to suppose that a sculpture monument to an unknown political

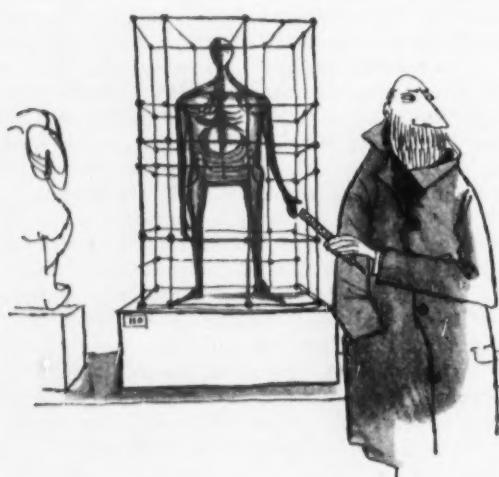
prisoner should necessarily inspire feelings of opposition at all. One of the more obvious feelings that it *would* inspire, for example, is curiosity—curiosity about who the prisoner was, where he came from and what he was charged with, if anything. There is an automatic assumption on the part of most viewers that he must be an inhabitant of one of the nations beyond the Iron Curtain, or at least of some half-savage country like



Spain or Yugoslavia, and is being persecuted for having expressed heretical opinions on genetics or trying to poison a Marshal. But he might just as well be a Scottish university student who has defaced a pillar-box bearing the (to him) meaningless symbol E II R and, like a good patriot, refused to pay his fine.

What such a composition ought to inspire, of course, is sympathy. The fact that Mr. Szilvassy's demonstration took the form it did, and was not confined to slipping miniature loaves of bread, cigarettes, files, and so on, between the wires, should cause the sculptor disquiet rather than satisfaction. Indeed, he would do well to consider whether there may not be some ambiguity in the bending of his wire which has resulted in his work symbolizing a well-known commissar of secret police, or perhaps something even more fundamentally unpleasing, such as a toad.

As a matter of fact, it hardly seems credible that all the exhibits at the Tate could possibly represent the same thing. One entry is undoubtedly part of a lobster, whatever its symbolical meaning. Miss Barbara Hepworth's piece, or rather pieces, were obviously intended to go into the Mexican exhibition in the adjoining gallery, where they would have symbolized wind gods or rain gods or Quetzalcoatl. M. Antoine Pevsner's design must have started out as an attempt to make a three-dimensional harp with a central cockpit from which the player, whether a political prisoner or not, could use both arms and legs. The fact that none of these exhibits touched off any





reaction in the public, did not even kindle a glimmer of suspicion in the eye of any of the countless secret police agents who must be covering the exhibition on behalf of the Iron Curtain Powers, is additional proof of their irrelevance. Anyone sensitive enough to be provoked into hasty action at the sight of Mr. Butler's wire pulpit could not fail to be similarly affected by Mr. Lynn Chadwick's spiked shields, which would, by the look of them, take to pieces just as easily. Yet up to the time of writing, Mr. Chadwick's shields and M. Pevsner's

harp and Miss Hepworth's gods and the lobster and the rest of them are as good as on the day the exhibition opened.

One last idea, more likely to have occurred to Mr. Butler than to Mr. Szilvassy, concerns the fact that this shilling's worth of wire was insured for a thousand pounds. One knows about Whistler and his "lifetime of experience" . . .

B. A. YOUNG

(A notice by William Gaunt of the Unknown Political Prisoner exhibition will appear next week.)



CORINTHIAN COLUMN

IT was a fine poet, undoubtedly, who wrote the lines:

*"When the horses ran at Lincoln
All the while my head was whirling
With a dream about the incon-
Vertibility of sterling."*

Yet how few race-goers consider the larger aspects of currency and finance, and all their manifold implications, when attempting to choose a likely winner at the inaugurating ceremony of the flat season!

That the meeting on the Carholme dates back to the reign of James I is a matter of common knowledge among the sporting fraternity, but it is not so often remembered by punters that the second coronation of Henry II was solemnized in the Cathedral of the Fenland city, or that the see was transferred thither from Dorchester by Remigius not long after the Norman conquest. Incidentally, it was a member of the great Sibthorpe family who is said to have driven a coach and four down the Steep Hill, and the inhabitants of the county were once supposed to have subsisted almost entirely on poppy seed.

* * * * *

Protection from the attacks of philistines at the Tate Gallery could surely be secured by placing iron shutters round the exhibits of the type generally used by fishmongers and greengrocers, leaving a few eye-holes for inspection by the public. This would prevent a recurrence of the absurd contretemps when "Mother Earth" was found to have been removed from its concrete pedestal and employed to carry away milk empties from the restaurant in the basement; or still more recently when a curator was discovered using "Sound," the four-inch-high abstraction of a road drill, to clean his tobacco pipe.



"It's one of those patent smoking cures."

It is not often that a dog is worried by a sheep, yet the experience befell the writer of this column not many years ago, when he saw a Southdown ram in hot pursuit of a dachshund near Rottingdean. The canine fugitive only escaped disaster by jumping through a fence into a place of safety whither his ovine persecutor was unable to follow him. The tables were turned with a vengeance, and Sir Alfred Munnings would have delighted in this scene, and no doubt have commemorated it on canvas.

* * * * *

Speculation is rife as to the prospects of Mr. Mamoru Shigemitsu in the Japanese elections next month. It is anybody's guess whether he will, or will not, find himself at the head of the Coalition Government in Tokyo. Japanese liberalism is a plant of tender growth, and the attitude of Mr. Ichiro Hatoyama, for all we care, may well decide the issue. A curious mistake, by the way, was made by one of our great daily papers in dealing with this phase of Far-Eastern affairs, when it stated that Mr. Yoshida "had not yet burnt his boots." The word, of course, should have been "boats."

* * * * *

Seven hundred pages may seem long for a book of autobiographical reminiscences, yet no one will grudge this length to Sir Joseph Bagwathy's *Forty-nine Years of Doodling*, which includes five hundred and eighty facsimile reproductions of this inimitable form of modern art, all composed by the author during sessions of interdepartmental committees, and in many cases while the author himself was in the Chair. The "Rat Eating a Cabbage" on page 197 has proved as interesting to psychologists as the "Dream of Gerontius" on page 354. Sir Joseph's house at Nearleigh End has long been famous for its bougainvilleas, and he has recently invented a new tomato.

* * * * *

It has occurred to us that the readers of this column may be interested in the subject of clichés, and we should be glad to learn from them which is their favourite cliché in the English language. Quotations from the poets are not excluded, but it is important that the word cliché should be written clearly at the top left-hand corner of the envelope.

We cannot fail to be aware that this new competition will open up to our readers a vista of considerable charm. The first prize, a free seat on Hammersmith Bridge for the University Boat Race, will be awarded to the most captivating entry. It had been hoped that Marshal Tito would consent to be present at the adjudication, and bestow upon the successful protagonist the Blue Ribbon of the written and spoken word, but this has unfortunately not proved possible.

EVOE

6 6

On the Bonnie, Bonnie Banks o' Lake Leman

"Narriman is at present in Geneva, and her mother, Madame Assila Sadek, who is with her, told Reuter earlier to-day: 'We ha'e left Rome for always. We will neer go back. . . .'"—*The Star*



“Mais mon pauvre crétin, tout le monde sait qu'à Westminster le roi Garter précède le roi Clarenceux.”

ONE WAY OF BUYING A DESK

I BELIEVED that my whole life was in disorder because I did not own a desk, and that as soon as I acquired one all my problems would solve themselves.

Outside the second-hand furniture shop there were two wooden plate-racks, a horsehair sofa, a pianola, a green vase, a revolving book-case and a grey top hat on a card table with innumerable cigarette burns in the green baize. But no desk.

Two shadowy figures moved about the shop as if lost in limbo, so that it was startling to hear the woman ask "Can I help you?"

I explained that the desk I wanted must be strong enough to support a typewriter and that it must have drawers on either side wide enough to hold manuscripts.

The man wearing the plus four suit of reddish tweed stepped forward and said "What you want really is an Edwardian sideboard with the back sawn off."

"Why, have you got an Edwardian sideboard with the back sawn off?"

"No. No I haven't."

He retreated back into the shadows and the woman said,

"We've got a good desk downstairs," and, as I followed her down the rickety stairs, "You'll like this desk."

The desk stretched like a great grin across the basement—a wide, thick, strong desk with a red covered top with gold piping.

"It's too big," I said.

"It would look nothing in a consulting room," she answered. "But Mr. Rollo will be in soon."

The man in the plus four suit had posted himself at the top of the stairs. "Now I do know a desk that would suit you fine," he said.

"Where?"

"In the yard, at the back. But I am going to have it myself up at my own place."

A burly thick-shouldered man, wearing a bowler hat, came in.

"Lady here wants a pedestal desk, Mr. Rollo," Plus Fours explained.

"We've got the very thing for you over in the yard—a black deal desk."

"Not mine, I hope," Plus Fours said.

"No, the other one." Mr. Rollo moved a couple of washstands and a marble table-top and I saw now that he was the strong man of the business.

"Is it a pedestal desk?" I asked.

"Pedestal? That's it—proper pedestal."

"How much?"

"Twenty-one shillings."

We walked across the shop, through the mews and into a yard. A man came out of a signal box carrying a bunch of keys. He opened the first garage door. Behind some coal scuttles, towel horses and miniature billiards tables we saw one side of the pedestal desk—a black wooden group of drawers with a white chalk mark, 21/-.

Past some perambulators at the other end of the garage we saw the second half.

"There's your desk," Mr. Rollo said, making a white chalk mark on it. "What's wrong with that?"

"Well, I did want a top to the desk."

"A top? Oh, yes, I was forgetting that, it must be in the other garage. It would be, wouldn't it. Joe, open the other garage."

Joe looked intently at the bunch of keys and then at the shape of the lock as if he was aiming to match them up for an intelligence test. The door creaked open. This time we walked forward through a guard of honour of dentist's equipment.

Plus Fours pointed to a complete desk with a torn leather top. "That's mine, but you can have it if you like."

"Don't you want it yourself?"

"Not now that I've seen it again I don't."

Mr. Rollo glanced at the leather topped desk—"Seven pounds fifteen." He looked behind a dentist's chair—"Here's the top of the other one." With the quickness of a Customs Officer he made another chalk mark.

"This one's only twenty-one shillings, isn't it?"

"No, three guineas. Twenty-one shillings for one side, twenty-one shillings for the other, and twenty-one for the top. That makes sixty-three bob."

"Too much," said the man in plus fours. "Too much by a long chalk," he added, pleased with the play on words.

"I wonder which one I ought to have?"

"I shouldn't have either if I were you."

Mr. Rollo took no notice of the strange salesman. "You won't find a better mahogany desk than that for three guineas anywhere," he said.

"Get the other two sides out of the first garage, Joe," he added, "and take the desk to the lady's place."

Plus Fours watched the van being loaded up. "My name's Blythe," he volunteered.

Blythe and Joe carried the desk up to my flat; they made four journeys because one of the drawers had fallen out. I could hear them talking as they carried this last





"They say they've come over for William's Coronation."

piece up. "I'm often sick on the sea myself. Lots of sailors are, you know."

Now that the top was on the desk I saw that it was shoulder high.

"It's an architect's table really," Blythe remarked. "But I dare say Mr. Rollo would be glad to sell you a high stool to go with it. I'll have a look to-morrow, or better still I'll come round and saw the desk down." He made a sawing movement sideways with his arm. "I should say a foot and a half would do it."

I sawed the desk down myself that evening.

The next morning I called at the shop and explained to Mr. Rollo that it would no longer be necessary for his salesman to shorten the desk.

"Salesman! He's no salesman of mine," Mr. Rollo said. "He likes to come and tell people what they should and shouldn't buy. I admit he's got some stuff from me in his time, but he's always changing his

mind. Finds it difficult to settle down to civilian life after the Army, I dare say."

"The Army? Surely he's in the Navy. He talked about sailors being sick on the sea and that sort of thing."

"The Army, I thought it was, but I didn't take much notice. I'll just look in my notebook and see if I've got his address. Here you are, 521 Trevor Road, Kensington. Trevor 1280, Archibald White."

"White? I don't think that was the name."

"What was the name you thought he told you?"

"Blythe."

"Oh, well, perhaps I wrote it down wrong."

"I'll try that number."

There was no answer to the number, but at midday the telephone rang in my flat.

"Wing Commander Whyte-Blythe here. Is it O.K. for that carpentering job on the desk?"

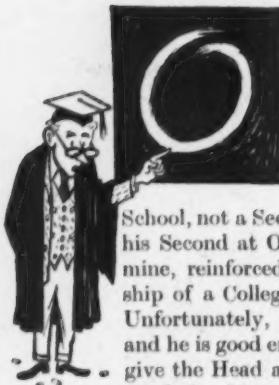
I explained that the desk had already been sawn down.

"Good show," said the Wing Commander. "In that case I think I'll go off for a spot of golf this afternoon."

After lunch I began to clean the desk; the black paint came off and a beautiful red mahogany emerged. There was a great deal of sawdust and some pieces of wood on the floor and I realized now that the desk was creating a greater disorder in my room.

I looked out of the window. At this moment a red sports car stopped at the traffic lights. Wing Commander Whyte-Blythe was sitting in the driver's seat and beside him the strange hooded figure of a set of golf clubs in a rainproof bag. The Wing Commander was no longer wearing his red tweed plus fours, but instead a neat blue suit which I supposed he considered more suitable for an afternoon on the links.

INEZ HOLDEN

*The Educational Ladder***FIRST STEPS AT ST. WILLOUGHBY'S**

For the men who have joined the staff with me I think I need fear only Robertson. He went to a minor Public School, not a Secondary School, but his Second at Oxford was not, like mine, reinforced by the treasurership of a College Literary Society. Unfortunately, the boys like him and he is good enough at billiards to give the Head a game, but not too good for him, unless this is just cunning.

Prette is a poor creature and will probably be content to end his days as an assistant master. Applebody appears to be a half-wit. When I gave my form a punishment for ragging him they first thought it was cheek of me to interfere between them and another master, but then they swung round to respecting me for loyalty to my caste. I need not be afraid that my intervention will really do Applebody any good.

Nobody is effectively in charge of the History here. Old Atkins may seem scholarly enough when he is reading with the University candidates in the library, but he has not the slightest idea of organizing the subject throughout the school. He looks forward to a quiet cup of tea and crossword puzzle at break, so I have peppered him with polite requests for directions about what to do and how to do it until he burst out "Use your head, Haywood, and take a bit of responsibility for yourself." This delegation of authority was made before witnesses. Have told Prette that the school model of a Witenagemot is to be moved from his classroom to mine. Absurd to scatter what teaching material there is all over the building.

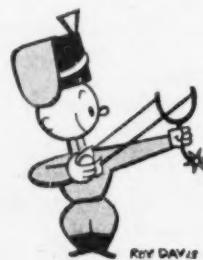
Applebody has been landed with the woodwork club. He was damply grateful when in my briskly comradely tone I offered to help him run it. He can supervise the chisel-sharpening and screw-sorting while I get the better carpenters on to making models, and making them fast.

My room is getting rapidly filled with models. Pershore, the Deputy-Head, takes some odd form for Classics in there and particularly objects to the Rotation of Crops: the clockwork takes a goodish time to run down and overlaps his lesson. I point out that there is nowhere else for the stuff to go, except the library. He agrees with me that it is a pity the library has to be used only for the intermittent instruction of two or three boys.

Robertson runs the Cubs. Have offered to house a good deal of their equipment in my room as he teaches in the Labs, where there is room only for scientific apparatus. Pershore is driven mad by all the poles and ropes that get in his way when he tries to stop the Crops from Rotating. Have told him I do not like to make difficulties about Robertson's dumping his gear on me as everything goes straight back to the Head during their games of billiards; Pershore agrees that as I am such a new member of the staff it is better for me not to complain.

Robertson reported a boy to Pershore, his dormitory master, for making sulphuretted hydrogen without being asked to; Pershore did not beat him. The boys will take the hint quickly enough. Then, at the last staff meeting, some of the senior men complained of the noise there has been during Rest recently—Robertson has been on rest-duty. During the informal tea-party that follows the meeting, Potter, who retires in the summer, was put up to chaff the Head about his games of billiards with Robertson.

Atkins ill. Volunteered to take a



Boys' Battery. Royal Artillery.

period for him and moved all the models into the library. Reported a prominent Cub to the Head for ingeniously complicating the spinning jenny. This gave me an opportunity for stressing the value of three-dimensional work in History. Got the Head to say that a school museum might not be a bad thing and would fit in well with the library. Have suggested to Pershore that, as I have to spend so much time on the spot anyway, I could save Atkins trouble if I took over the librarianship from him.

Take most of my classes in the library now to be near the models. Atkins has to trapse the school looking for a vacant room. He is afraid of the Head ever since the row when he gave a boy whose parents the Head disliked a fat part in *Hamlet*; he is not disposed to cross-examine him on what powers he has conferred on me.

Applebody keeps fussing over stock-lists for the woodwork club and badgers me to produce some of the models for the end-of-term display. Have told him in my curtly preoccupied tone that I am much too busy with library, museum, Historical Society, Antiquarian Society and Cubs to be bothered. Loathe Cubs, but they are a useful preliminary to Scouting, and that is essential for getting the kind of job that I am after.

Feel I have established myself. All the dormitory masters beat boys that I need beaten. Pershore is beginning to realize that Atkins should be merely the man taking advanced History while I become Head of the History Department, relying on Pershore's grasp of conditions in all parts of the school. He has consented to criticize my Paper on *The Integration of Literary and Three-Dimensional Methods in Contemporary Educational Theory and Practice*. A good deal reaches him through the boys in his dormitory and he will know my high opinion of his ability and experience.

Boys, rightly used, can be invaluable to a schoolmaster's career.

R. G. G. PRICE

THE REAPER

BORED to a standpoint little short of swooning
When told to reap a meadow and its verges,
The Highland Lass expressed exasperation
By dint of—if not actually crooning,
At least its nineteenth-century equation—
And loosed a spate of melancholy dirges
On frankly unappreciative curlews
(Or something more sparrowial or pigeonous
If the above-named birds are not indigenous
To that specific part of Scotland's purlieus).

Wordsworth, however, chanced to pass her, hiking,
Just as these wails were borne upon the wings
Of song, and thought them singularly striking,
And asked: "Will no one tell me what she sings?"
Nobody did, though, for the simple reason
That nobody besides himself was there,
For had the then-prevailing harvest season
Not whisked the local hearties off elsewhere
The Highland Lass would never have been landed
With doing all that reaping single-handed.

Instead of musing in the middle distance
And waiting for some non-existent oracle
To answer questions palpably rhetorical,
He might have made the neighbourhood resound
With baritonic offers of assistance.
Perhaps his rainbow-conscious heart, through leaping
To where the topmost summit of the heavens is,
Was far too tired to do a spot of reaping,
Or help the poor girl bash the sheaves around,
Or heave the tin containing her elevenses.

Think what would be *your* feelings, gentle reader,
If, having slogged all day among the stubble, you
Had used up all your repertoire of *lieder*
And couldn't sing one more, or even hum one—
How thankful you would be to talk to someone,
Even if it were only William W.!

* * * * *
Particularly for the chance to say
Exactly what you thought of Lucy Gray.

D. A. WILKINSON





EATEN ANY GOOD BOOKS LATELY?

WHAT is one to make of the story that a gentleman in the West Country, who in earlier life either was or was not a sergeant in the Royal Irish Constabulary, has made history in his own peculiar way by eating his pension warrant? His wife wrapped it round the fish, and, before she knew where she was, down it had gone—all smothered in tomato ketchup—and the rest is silence.

How does the Welfare State right a wrong of such dimensions? I tried a Parliamentary Question about it.

"Since pension warrants, considered as a foodstuff," said the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food, "are no longer rationed nor are they subject to price-control, my right hon. friend can take no responsibility for any such warrants as may be consumed by ex-sergeants of the Royal Irish Constabulary whether in the course of or outside their official duties."

Whither could I turn for remedy? It was cogently pointed out that, as the warrant-swallowing was perfectly healthy, his case could not be a matter for the Minister of Health. It was pointed out that, as there was no longer any evidence that he was entitled to a pension, it could not be a matter for the Minister of Pensions. The Attorney-General thought that he might

possibly be able to prosecute him for "unlicensed eating of public property," but apart from that no Minister could suggest anything that he could possibly do about it.

I tried it—for want of a better arena—in the Simple Spelling Bill. It seemed a novel and convincing explanation of the alarming growth of illiteracy. "If, Mr. Speaker," I cogently argued, "the public insists on eating its print instead of reading it, how can we be surprised that illiteracy is on the increase? Why should not the Central Office of Information cover every hoarding in the land with gigantic exhortations to EAT LESS PRINT?" But Mr. Follick, I am bound to say, thought little of this suggestion. He argued that, if only "pension warrant" had been written as it was pronounced—"pen-SHE-un oo-o-RUNT"—the ex-sergeant would have had no difficulty whatsoever in distinguishing it from a fish and the problem would never have arisen.

But certainly the contretemps had—and, indeed, has—its difficulties. I tried to comfort the ex-sergeant by telling him that it was possible to get duplicates of official documents that have been accidentally mislaid—if indeed "mislaid" be the word.

"If you were properly entitled to your pension," said I, a loyal supporter of the Government, "no

doubt we shall be able to obtain it for you."

He looked at me in stupefaction at such naïveté.

"Entitled to a pension?" he said. "D'you think I'd have eaten the warrant if I'd been entitled to the pension? I'd been drawing it for five years because they muddled me up with a man of the same name."

"But were you ever in the Royal Irish Constabulary?" I asked.

"In and out," he said, in an airy sort of way.

"But you can't expect me to connive at a fraud on the public revenue," I said a little pompously.

"I'm not asking you to connive at anything," he said. "I haven't come here to discuss why I am receiving a pension. That is a purely historical question. You can't expect me to discuss a question like that so long as the issue of Partition remains unsettled. What I want to know is, since I am getting a pension, how can I get it increased?"

"But are you entitled to a pension?" I asked.

"That has nothing whatever to do with it," said the ex-sergeant. "The Government promised that if food subsidies were reduced then those who were living on pensions would get their pensions increased. It never said anything about their being entitled to pensions. The Government must keep its word."

"But are you living on a pension?" I asked.

"Of course I am," said the ex-sergeant. "Haven't I just told you that I ate the damned thing? And, what's more," he added, "I liked it—not bad at all. It was tasty. I'm no reader. I don't like print outside the stomach."

That was to my mind the most interesting part of the story. His was indeed a new view. If, as he assures me, Government publications and legal documents make good eating, why surely there is the solution to all our problems.

Wise men tell us in their books and their pamphlets that we are in imminent danger of starvation. Unless we turn our milk into buttons and export them to the

Argentine, how can we ever expect to get the dollars to buy bacon from Denmark? It is as plain as that. But is it necessary to go this round-about way to salvation? Why not just eat the books and pamphlets ourselves and be done with it? The world my oyster—the Stationery Office my larder.

Here surely is a constructive suggestion for the Mrs. Beeton of a later day. None of the impurities of modern food are to be found in a Government Blue Book. There is no phytic acid in it. It is free from agene. It does not intoxicate, if taken in moderation. Begin with small things, a Statutory Instrument or two, as garnishing; but

then, as the stomach grows stronger, we can work up to more solid sustenance—the Road Act, the Digest of Statistics, the Town Plan for Wolverhampton itself—who knows with what delicacies we may tempt our guests, as we work our way through the whole British Museum in our solemn and dedicated task of freeing mankind from the burden of print? What matter that a generation is growing up that cannot read print, so long as we can see to it that there is no print for it to read? That is surely what the planners call adjusting the demand to the supply.

"Another amendment, Mr. Gherkin?"

"Thank you, Mr. Bowles. Just a small one, if I may."

"I wonder if I might trouble you for a second helping of *Hansard*, Mrs. Humdrum?"

"You're welcome, Dr. Cowbody.
Please pass your plate."

I give the suggestion to Dr. Hill. Mr. Morgan Phillips, you will remember, promised to eat his hat if the Socialists did not gain a by-election in the first Tory year of office. The year is up.

*Hat-eating is icumen in,
Lhude sing cuccu.*

But, if so, why not print-eating, too? Why should Mr. Morgan Phillips have all the fun? Let "Fair shares for all" be our motto.

CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS



RUNNING TO WASTE

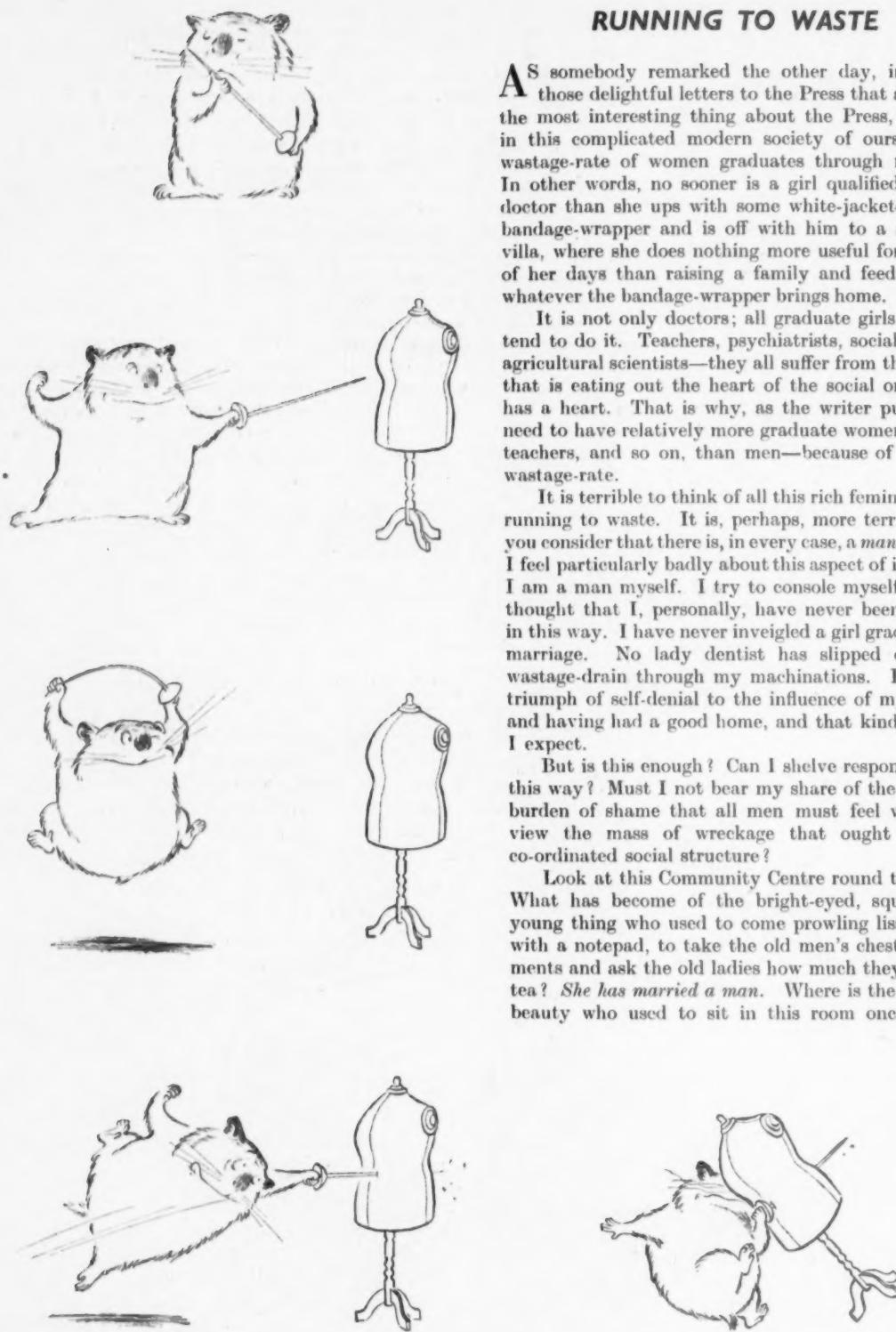
AS somebody remarked the other day, in one of those delightful letters to the Press that are really the most interesting thing about the Press, there is, in this complicated modern society of ours, a high wastage-rate of women graduates through marriage. In other words, no sooner is a girl qualified to be a doctor than she ups with some white-jacketed junior bandage-wrapper and is off with him to a suburban villa, where she does nothing more useful for the rest of her days than raising a family and feeding it on whatever the bandage-wrapper brings home.

It is not only doctors; all graduate girls do it, or tend to do it. Teachers, psychiatrists, social workers, agricultural scientists—they all suffer from this canker that is eating out the heart of the social order, if it has a heart. That is why, as the writer put it, you need to have relatively more graduate women doctors, teachers, and so on, than men—because of this high wastage-rate.

It is terrible to think of all this rich feminine talent running to waste. It is, perhaps, more terrible when you consider that there is, in every case, a *man* involved. I feel particularly badly about this aspect of it, because I am a man myself. I try to console myself with the thought that I, personally, have never been tempted in this way. I have never inveigled a girl graduate into marriage. No lady dentist has slipped down the wastage-drain through my machinations. I owe this triumph of self-denial to the influence of my mother, and having had a good home, and that kind of thing, I expect.

But is this enough? Can I shelve responsibility in this way? Must I not bear my share of the collective burden of shame that all men must feel when they view the mass of wreckage that ought to be a co-ordinated social structure?

Look at this Community Centre round the corner. What has become of the bright-eyed, square-jawed young thing who used to come prowling lissomely in, with a notepad, to take the old men's chest measurements and ask the old ladies how much they spend on tea? *She has married a man.* Where is the hawk-like beauty who used to sit in this room once a week,



watching, always watching, while little children fitted red cubes into green sockets? *She has married a man.* Not the same man. Another man. In some ways this makes it worse.

Something has to be done about this wastage-rate. For the sake of Society, mind you; not for the sake of the girl graduates. Too much can be made of *their* sufferings. You cannot make a Welfare omelette without breaking eggs—if you can get any eggs. These girls have brought it on themselves, as often as not. They lacked a sense of perfect dedication. Certainly the wretched men are the most to blame; but *no man ever married a lady social worker without some encouragement from the lady social worker.* Dr. Constance Flitch has proved this in a brilliant series of experiments.

Some time, at some stage of her career, the typical social worker suddenly loses sight of those high ideals that have sustained her throughout her excruciatingly dull training and enabled her to subsist on her pitifully low starting salary. What causes her to do this? We can hazard a guess. *It is a man.* There are men all around her, all over the place. What is easier to suppose than that she has caught sight of one, even spoken to one? The dedicated graduate can brush aside such irrelevant biological phenomena and plunge on, forwards and upwards, forever weighing, measuring, tabulating, analysing. Not so the ordinary, weak social worker, subject in a lesser degree to all the emotional stresses that beset her charges. She sees this man; after a more or less severe period of mental struggle she speaks to him. Possibly he speaks to her first.

She is not unaware of what she is doing; she has heard of men. A whole hour's lecture in the second-year course was devoted to them. She is revolted, no doubt; but she weighs the situation up, coldly, calculatingly, as graduate social workers will. On the one side is this man; on the other is her social work. Even the man, she thinks, is better than that. Before the next social survey is so much as mapped out she is married. So the wastage-rate mounts.

Dr. Edith Stump has suggested that we abolish men. It is an attractive suggestion; but will it really help matters? We have to plan for the availability of

experimental material for the next generation of social workers. Better to follow Dr. Hilda Vawkes's plan; this far-seeing educationist proposes that immediately after the graduation ceremony female students should be isolated. They should be bundled away into a huge stone building and only let out in droves to do their doctoring and dentistry under armed guard. In this way the greatest happiness of the greatest number would be attained. To critics who complain that such a procedure would be contrary to British ideals of liberty, Dr. Vawkes asks, severely, whether we are aiming at liberty or licence? Let us not confuse the two, she says—and, to my mind, rightly. Mercy is sometimes harsh. The girl graduate, peering through her barred windows at the housewives of the Welfare State queuing for fish outside, may well consider her lot a relatively happy one, licence or no licence.

Other critics, of a class hardly to be described as serious thinkers, have been heard to declare that the high wastage-rate among female graduates is in itself the best guarantee of a high throughput of girl graduates in the next generation. This statement is so incomprehensible that the best thing to do is dismiss it as mere confusion of mind.

R. P. LISTER



BONFIRE

SOMEHOW our bonfire afternoon fell flat. Paper and straw were useless, so we broke dry sticks, and found some paraffin to soak the windward side. The bonfire roared and spat, lost interest, hissed and snivelled. After that we puffed in turn till we could hardly croak. By sunset a blue foolish wisp of smoke rose from it, like a feather from a hat.

The evening shuffled away in slippers feet. But in the orchard, mocking our earned ease, our bonfire flowered and flared against the night. None warmed numb fingers at that glorious heat, and no one noticed the pruned apple-trees' fantastic postures in the orange light.

PETER DICKINSON





We've Got a Horse

HAVE you ever been?" asked the Irishman.

"No, but I used to look forward to the broadcast," I replied.

"Ah, it's grand with those huge dark fences, that water jump, and the horses—all the best of 'em Irish, of course—it's a great race all right."

"I don't suppose I shall ever see it now," I said, "but I should like to—especially this year."

"And why especially this year?" politely asked the third man, the man who didn't know about horses.

"Because of something our village blacksmith told me. It seems he has a friend in a racing stable."

"And what stable is that?" asked the Irishman.

"The stable where the horse is trained." I wasn't going to be drawn too easily.

"And what is the name of this animal? I presume it has a name?" asked the man who didn't know about horses.

This was my moment, and from behind the menu card I gave what was perhaps rather an exaggerated imitation of a racing man giving a tip, hissing out the sibilant "Whispering Steel."

"And is he by Steelpoint?" asked the Irishman.

"He is that." The Irish was catching.

"Then he's bred right for the job. Has he been there before?"

I knew what "there" meant—that unprepossessing space between a railway embankment and a canal, hallowed by the exploits of Troytown, Golden Miller, the Reeses, Anthonys and the less successful Captain Becher.

"He fell at the first ditch last year."

"Do they have little ditches there as well as fences?" asked the unknowledgeable one, and I had to explain about the guard-rail, the ditch and the fence.

"But the blacksmith told me something else," I went on—"real inside information."

"What's that?" the Irishman asked.

"They're not going to run him in blinkers this time."

"Why not?"

"It appears that few, if any, horses have won the National wearing them. A horse needs, so they were saying, to be able to look all round him at Aintree and see exactly what's going on."

"Will he be able to see Mrs. Topham?" asked the Irishman.

"I doubt it," I said. "I expect Mrs. Topham will be invisible, issuing statements."

"I hope this horse of yours is trained by a Wizard," said the man who didn't know about horses.

"A Wizard?"

"Surely all great trainers are Wizards. Wasn't there one down your way—the Wizard of Manton?"

"He's been dead for years."

"Doesn't anybody carry on the business still?"

"Not exactly. Anyway this Whispering Steel is trained by Kilpatrick."

"Bred at Kilcullen, County Kildare," the Irishman read out of his paper, "and you say trained by Kilpatrick: that sounds Irish enough."

"But I insist on a Wizard," said the man who didn't know about horses.

"I can't promise a Wizard, but I remember a great rider telling me about horse spells," I went on. "As he neared the winning post he used to lean more and more forward and hiss into his horse's ear, 'Horse and Hattock! Horse and Go!'"

"A sound idea," said the Irishman. "That would be to remind him to lean forward, of course. Most steeplechase jocks finish on their horses' tails."

"He said it was the spell that did the trick."

"Ah, but he was codding you."

"All the same, I think it was the spell," quietly remarked the man who didn't know about horses. "I wish I could remember how that particular one went on. I used to dabble in that sort of thing quite a bit at one time."

"In horses?" we both asked incredulously.

"No, in spells. I know spells of all sorts. This one, I seem to recollect, was used by witches about to mount. It's all part of magic, you know," he said in his deliberate, matter-of-fact way.

"Magic or no magic, this Whispering Steel of yours must stand a great chance," the Irishman started off again. "He's a Steel-point horse, foaled in Ireland, trained by an Irishman and," eyeing the paper, "ridden by Morrow—he'd be Irish, too."

"And," I dropped my voice so that the waiter couldn't hear, "no blinkers this time."

"There's only one thing," said the man who didn't know about horses, as we got up to leave, "I haven't got a bookie these days; Irene, my wife, is a Spiritualist, you know."

We didn't know. We didn't understand.

"Yes, Irene was always against my last bookmaker. She said he had such a dirty aura."

"Oh that's easily fixed," I reassured him. "My bookmaker has the face of an organist."

We parted outside the restaurant. "Horse and Hattock!" cried the Irishman. "Horse and Go!" I replied. Slowly memory stirred in the man who didn't know about horses. A look of witchlike fury started to debase his features and, flourishing his umbrella—or was it his broomstick—triumphantly, he cackled "Horse and Pelatis. Ho, Ho!"

G.T.

 6

"Bull Calf (female), pedigree attested and fully registered; both sides full Bargower blood."

Advt. in Chester Chronicle
Uncertain business, farming.



IMPRESSIONS OF PARLIAMENT



Monday, March 16

Mr. JIM THOMAS, it has been said, looks more "like" a First Lord of the Admiralty than any previous holder of that exalted office, and he certainly mightily pleased the House of Commons to-day by his urbanely quarter-deck manner, in presenting the annual Estimates of the Royal Navy. He got a particularly hearty cheer for a statement which strongly recalled this country's less apologetic days—that, while we might no longer have the *biggest* navy, "we have no intention of its being anything but the *best*."

The House was distinctly less pleased to hear that the owner of the second largest navy in the world (that of the United States being *the* largest) was the Soviet Government. There had been a "very remarkable" step up in Soviet naval production of late, and the fleet now included about twenty powerful cruisers, over one hundred destroyers, and over three hundred

and fifty submarines of all classes. And all this added up to the fact that we were being forced to spend this year the sum of £329,500,000 on our Navy, including seventy to eighty times as much on anti-submarine and anti-mine work as we had in 1949-50. For it had always to be remembered that the Soviet Navy was strong enough to meet all defensive needs and also to provide powerful support to land forces in amphibious actions and to wage offensive war at sea.

The House seemed a trifle puzzled, in these circumstances, that the Estimates for the current year were the same, more or less, as those for last year, and Mr. JOHN DUGDALE, who was at the Admiralty under the Labour Government, said bluntly that the Navy had had a raw deal, as compared with the other Services. For this he blamed the appointment of Lord ALEXANDER, a soldier, as Defence Minister.

Tuesday, March 17

In a believe-it-or-not mood, the Commons reached the Third Reading of the Steel House of Commons: Steel Bill Goes Bill. The House is going to be lonely without it, for it has become part of the place, so long has it been there.

Major RENTON startled the House, at Question-time, by a suggestion that "the heads of the nationalized industries should be brought together," but it turned out that he was not advocating an experiment in personal violence—as some professed to think—but a conference, which was certainly no novelty.

Mr. EDEN and Mr. BUTLER, fresh from the United States, both came into action, Mr. Butler with the answers to countless questions, Mr. Eden with a formal statement on their trip across the Atlantic.

Mr. Eden, who sometimes departed from his script to insert tart

rejoinders to the Opposition's noisy interjections, made it quite clear that the United States Administration had received the British representatives with understanding and had agreed that our economic problems are America's problems and vice versa. They had also "readily confirmed" the understanding that, in the event of an "emergency" (the modern euphemism for "war") the use of U.S. warplanes operating from this country was to be a matter for consultation with the British Government at the time. And we should also be consulted in advance when any big international decisions were made by the United States Government. This drew a big cheer.

Having got the good will of the government in Washington, we were now going to talk to the governments of Western Europe, and put to them ideas and plans worked out at the Commonwealth Economic Conference held in London last December.

Mr. CHURCHILL announced sombrely that the Cabinet had been unable to accept the suggestion of the Hungarian Government that Mr. Edgar Sanders, imprisoned in Hungary, should be exchanged for Lee Meng, a Communist girl serving a life imprisonment sentence in Malaya, having had her death sentence commuted.

The P.M. also made a statement about the shooting down by Soviet MiG fighters of a British bomber on a training flight over Germany, with the loss of the entire crew. He conceded that the bomber might accidentally have drifted into the Eastern Zone, but held that this was no matter for the merciless action of shooting down the aircraft, but for formal complaint and inquiry. He added that should Soviet aircraft make the error of straying into the Western Zone, the more civilized course would still be pursued by us, in spite of everything. But he added that our planes would continue to make their practice and



training flights—also in spite of everything.

Wednesday, March 18

Sir DAVID MAXWELL FYFE produced a sort of balance sheet of the

House of Commons: Flood Balance Sheet recent flood disaster and showed what was to most a new side of his character when the Opposition seemed inclined to look down its nose at it. Sir DAVID is always so kindly and gentle, so diplomatic and suave, that the whole House was surprised when, accused of failing to live up to the Prime Minister's generous promises to the flood victims, he flared up and said such charges were unfair and, indeed, "irresponsible." Truth to tell, almost all the House seemed to agree with him, on the basis of the facts and figures he produced. These were that his original "snap" estimate of the damage done by the floods, "forty to fifty millions," was a little on the high side, and that the Government was proposing to spend up to £33½ millions, with several large unknown items as well.

And that, said the Home Secretary hotly, was not to be described as failure to carry out promises or as being anything but generous.

Sir DAVID (apologizing for his "heat") added that millions would



Major RENTON suggested that the heads of the nationalized industries should be brought together.

be needed for permanent improvements in our sea defences, as well as for first-aid for the sea-damaged land. The House cheered.

The suggestion was made that stamps should bear the likenesses of "eminent British personalities," and just as a considerable proportion of the House was trying on the cap, and assuming mail-examining expressions of (they hoped) becoming modesty, Mr. DAVID GAMMANS, for the G.P.O., put an end to all hopes by saying the idea could not be adopted. So Sir HERBERT WILLIAMS' suggestion that Members should go into a weekly ballot for the right to appear in effigy on the stamps was not needed.

Thursday, March 19

The customary second glance at the Services Estimates occupied

House of Commons: Farewell to the Estimates the attention of the Commons to-day, and late at

night all the outstanding Votes were put from the Chair, ready for Budget-Day, April 14. Time was when these were opposed automatically by an Opposition, but this policy has now been dropped. The long, long trail through the division-lobbies as vote after vote was opposed is therefore no longer a feature of Parliamentary life. Instead, thousands of millions of pounds were voted with little more than a nod of the head and a gentle "Aye!"

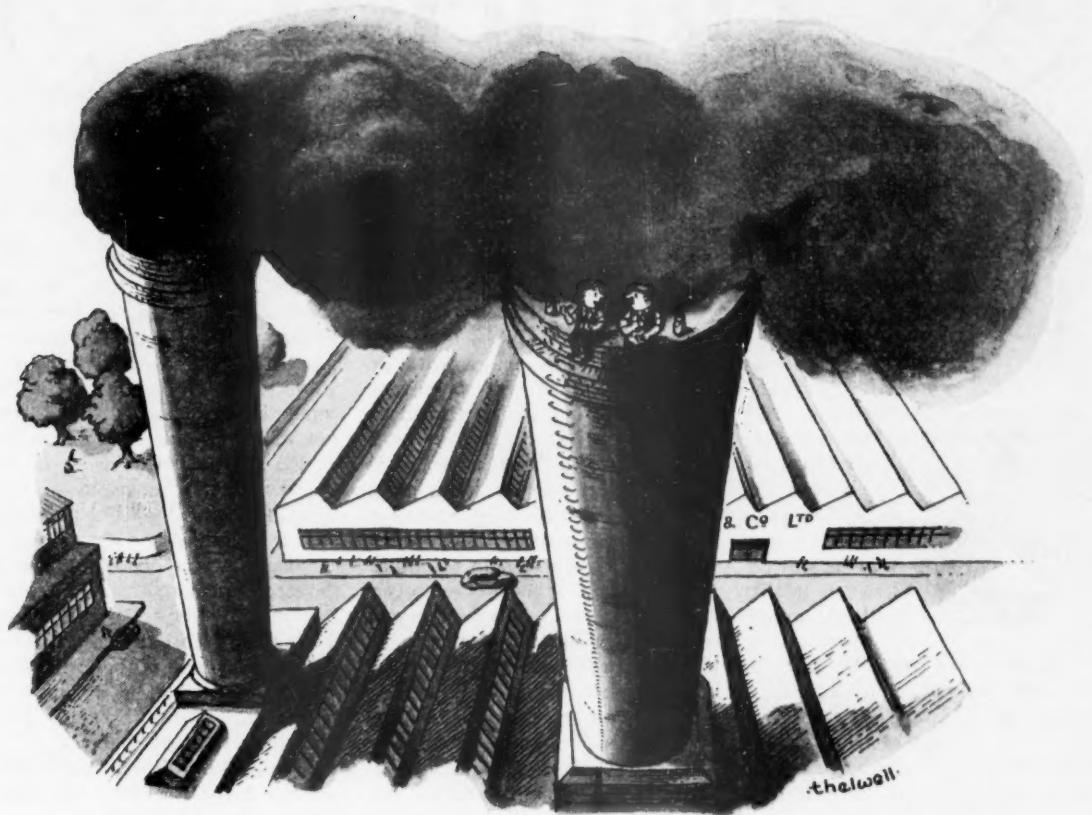
Friday, March 20

Sir EDWARD BOYLE offered some jewels of oratory in asking the

House of Commons: Jewellery Exhibited Commons to consider and condole with (in as practical a manner as possible) the position of the Birmingham jewellery industry. The rest of the Birmingham Members showed the correct amount of assiduity and interest, but there was a sad want of excitement on the part of Members from other parts of the land.

GUY EDEN





"Mind if I smoke?"

NATURAL CAUSES

THE superman was in himself the State
And all that the State stood for. He combined
The smooth implacability of fate
With the quick cunning of the human mind.
Oddly enough, the superman is dead.
He died when he was least expecting to,
Distressingly, by stages, in his bed,
As other people do.

Being himself, he could not be afforded
That privacy which is the plain man's lot.
Every last twitch was faithfully recorded
And broadcast to his people on the spot.
The doctors would, indeed, have much preferred,
Rather than risk some future odium,
To televise each twitch as it occurred.
But this, no doubt, will come.

He had killed largely, not from rage or spite,
Nor, in the ordinary sense, from greed,
But in the exercise of natural right,
To meet a routine, reasonable need.
He was himself most closely guarded from
Unnatural death. The man who bumped him off
Was searched, and carried neither gun nor bomb.
They overlooked his cough.

He who had seldom thought in human terms
Suddenly found the human outlook dim.
He had killed other men as men kill germs;
And germs, as they kill other men, killed him.
Violence he would have gloried in; but, given
That last despair that glory cannot gloss,
He may not, in the high accounts of heaven,
Have been a total loss.

P. M. HUBBARD

CRITICISM

BOOKING OFFICE

An Austrian Proust?

The Man Without Qualities. Robert Musil. Secker & Warburg, 25/-

THIS is the first volume of an immensely long novel written by an Austrian writer who died in 1942. It is superbly translated by Ethne Wilkins and Ernst Kaiser, who also contribute an introduction. The introduction is rather heavy going and it would be a great pity

if potential readers were put off by its length and, at times, rather prosy critical approach, because Musil is a novelist of quite exceptional interest. He was born in 1880 and intended for the Army; but at the end of his time at a cadet school he decided to become an engineer. He had a turn for science and invented a new kind of chronometer. However, writing was the pursuit that finally claimed him, and, although in his lifetime he never came near achieving any popular success, he was sufficiently regarded in his own country for a group of professional and business men to contribute enough money annually to keep him going. These benefactors were known as the Musil-Gesellschaft.

The setting of *The Man Without Qualities* is Vienna in 1913. It is an astonishing picture. On the one hand there is the world and the traditions embodied in the person of the Emperor Franz-Josef, who has already reigned for over sixty years; on the other is all that body of ideas to be associated with revolutionary politics, modernism in art, psycho-analysis, and so on, all of which had, by then, already come to vigorous life in some circles. Every kind of discordant element is

temporarily held together by tattered threads about to snap at any moment, these threads represented chiefly by Austrian frivolity and "the Austrian spirit." It is as if the whole empire was held up by private jokes and Strauss waltzes.

Ulrich, hero of the novel, is in his early thirties, and he obviously has a good deal in common with the author. He has been a cavalry officer, and, like Musil, turned to engineering; but he is "the man without qualities" or, more, so it seems, a man who has never quite found himself. Also the hero of a novel can never possess "qualities" which are shown only in the other characters. He has a firm, even rather aggressive, character; enjoys numerous love affairs; is known and liked; but can never make up his mind what he wants to do or be. Largely as a result of this indecision he gets roped in as secretary to "the Collateral Campaign." This is a great celebration organized for (as the Americans would say, "in aid of") the Emperor Franz-Josef's seventieth year of reign which will fall in 1918. Kaiser Wilhelm II's thirtieth year of reign, as it happens, will occur in the same year, and the Austrians are particularly anxious that their own jubilees should be on a larger, finer, nobler scale than anything "the Prussians" bring off. Austrian wit, Austrian good taste, and Austrian brilliance is to score off Prussian humourlessness, Prussian

vulgarity and Prussian taste for precision.

The opportunities in such a situation for irony are, of course, colossal. Musil uses them to the full. We are shown Ulrich's personal, social, and official life, and the gradual stewing up of this vast scheme which is to be the crowning glory of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In this empire "There was some display of luxury; but it was not, of course, as over-sophisticated as the French. One went in for sport; but not in madly Anglo-Saxon fashion. One spent tremendous sums on the Army; but only just enough to assure one of remaining the second weakest among the great Powers." Perhaps the best point that is brought out is the extraordinary smugness of the Austrians: their complete certainty that in spite of everything the ramshackle Empire could come to no real harm.

Contrasted with Ulrich's experiences is the trial of the murderer, Moosbrugger, which drags on endlessly because no one can finally decide whether or not the prisoner is mad. The points that arise in Moosbrugger's case are considered in the light of the other happenings of the books—these, too, inextricably woven into a pattern of seriousness and futility. There are innumerable other themes which are in one way and another brought together by the Collateral Campaign and the Moosbrugger case. Many of these subjects are clearly to be developed in the three volumes to follow.

The Man Without Qualities could not be called a light book or one that is specially easy to read; but its essentially philosophic basis is enlivened on every page by wit and real understanding of how human beings behave. For example, the observation that cold, calculating people do not get on in life nearly so easily as the warm-hearted people who have the capacity for liking those who are useful to themselves. One of its most entertaining aspects is the manner in which it uses in a



"I'm worried about little Natasha—she wouldn't confess this morning to something she hadn't done."

realistic and convincing manner so much of the material generally to be associated with the Vienna of musical comedy. It is the work of a writer of great distinction and the most interesting and enjoyable novel I have read for a long time. The name of Proust inevitably occurs to the mind as a parallel. Musil is perhaps not quite so good as Proust, but that is the kind of standard by which he is to be judged. ANTHONY POWELL

Wilde and His Family

The Wildes of Merrion Square: The Family of Oscar Wilde. Patrick Byrne. *Staples Press*, 10/6

NEXT year will see the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Oscar Wilde, and no doubt there will be a considerable expenditure of ink on the occasion. Is it too much to hope that it will be in the nature of a valedictory? On the subject of Wilde more than enough ink has surely been spent already. Much of it has been rather muddy, clouded with the agitated sediment of old passions and rancours; and though with the passing, one after another, of the actors in that sorry drama the stream has calmed and cleared, it has not ceased to flow. Indeed, within recent years, it has rather increased in volume. To a generation which has envisaged biography as a branch of psychopathology, Wilde's story has had an irresistible appeal.

Byron and Ruskin and Swinburne, the Carlyles and the Brownings are studied not for their literary achievement but for their more recondite temperamental peculiarities and in their most intimate human relations. Their writings, which, after all, are what make them worth remembering, are largely neglected. Wilde was a far lesser writer than any of those. Much that he wrote may well be neglected for the simple reason that it is negligible.

Nothing he wrote approached the first-rate. "Dorian Gray" and "Salome" are second-rate even in their own factitious kinds. "The Importance of Being Earnest," excellent entertainment as it is, lacks the incisiveness, the edge of really great comedy. The other plays are an uneasy amalgam of wit that smells of the lamp and sentimentality that reeks of the Victorian circulating library.

But it was when he was most serious that Wilde most completely betrayed himself. A fundamental falsity vitiates "De Profundis" and taints, if it does not altogether ruin, "The Ballad of Reading Goal." "Even when disaster struck him down," said Yeats, "it could not wholly clear his soul." An exigent critic can find little to say in his praise. Had his affections been directed into more orthodox channels,

it seems probable that his memory would have died with, or lived but faintly after, those who knew him.

Yet to have talked with those who knew him is to have received the impression of a man not only of brilliance and charm but of great kindness and magnanimity. "He ought to have been a king," said one of them, quite seriously. The kindness and magnanimity, if not the potential kingliness, are justly emphasized by Mr. Patrick Byrne, the latest adventurer into this particular field.

Mr. Byrne, it is true, has not set out to write a new biography of Oscar, who, he states categorically, "is not the subject of the present narrative," but to tell the story of his family as a whole. None the less, as the sub-title confesses, it is in Oscar that his book has its true *raison d'être*—even though Sir William Wilde achieved some distinction both as surgeon and as antiquary and some notoriety as an amorist, and Lady Wilde, an authoress whose pretensions were not quite matched by her accomplishment, was a hostess whose salons, though almost as shoddy as her husband's amours, attracted an occasional celebrity. "Robert Browning was there once," Mr. Byrne tells us, "and so was Ruskin, Ouida, Marie Corelli and others." What was best in her was that quality of kindness and magnanimity which her younger son inherited.

Of the lives of these elder Wildes, which have been written before, Mr. Byrne has given a not inadequate account. His grammar is by no means impeccable. He is sometimes

rather oddly naive and is prone to sententious generalizations, such as that "peasants the world over are reactionary, insanitary, and avaricious," or that "women dislike living in the country." He seems to have some prejudice against what used to be called polite society. There is no mud in his ink, but it is a little thin and lustreless.

FRANCIS BICKLEY

Socialist Thought—The Forerunners.

G. D. H. Cole. *Macmillan*, 25/-

This book wastes itself in discussing the exact meaning of a word—Socialism—whose connotations everyone understands, and in assigning priority for ideas that are as old as human society. Though professedly not a history, except of thought, it does take a little life from actual happenings and is at its best in quick biographies of the agitators and idealists, sometimes selfless and saintly, sometimes much the reverse, who have worked and often suffered for a cause and are now being forgotten.

Of the British contingent he places Robert Owen easily first, but he is mainly concerned with Saint-Simon, Fourier, Blanqui, Proudhon and a host of other French thinkers. Discussion of Karl Marx's writings is reserved for a further volume but his unpleasant personality none the less dominates these pages, if only because of his habit of attempting to oust his colleagues. For the rest one feels that while Professor Cole is distinguishing between fine shades of bygone opinion he is conscious that he is flogging the



skeletons of dead horses and even growing a little weary of the exercise. C. C. P.

Five Roundabouts to Heaven. John Bingham. *Gollancz*, 9/6

Five Roundabouts to Heaven is about murder, but it is neither a thriller nor a detective story. It is a comparatively straightforward account of the relationships between two men and two women which lead to the violent death of one of them. It starts *andante tranquillo*, and works up through a Rossinian *crescendo* to a breath-taking *finale* in which the final resolution is delayed with cunning artistry until, literally, the last page. Mr. Bingham allows an unfair share of omniscience to his first-person narrator, and he is annoyingly given to shunting back-and-forth in time; but his story has such momentum, his characters are so convincing, that one gladly forgives his faults and surrenders to his spell-binding. He has taken up the torch relinquished by Francis Iles and got it burning more brightly than ever.

B. A. Y.

The Soft Voice of the Serpent. Nadine Gordimer. *Gollancz*, 12/6

A volume of short stories, not out of place on the same shelf as those of Katharine Mansfield or Frances Towers, is made more remarkable by their publisher's assurance that their author is "still in her early twenties." Miss Gordimer has an extraordinary gift for isolating an emotion and presenting it to her readers with such clarity and poignancy that the impact is that of shared experience. Sometimes, as in her description of a dying bird seen through the eyes of the girl who, in mercy, must end its suffering, the result is intensely moving. Almost always she uses the fitting word or image, as in this description of a maimed man's faint movement towards normal life. "A first slight wind lifted again in the slack, furled sail of himself." The stories have a South African background but their action, action of the mind rather than the body, is universal. B. E. S.

AT THE PLAY

Titus Andronicus (CAMBRIDGE ARTS)

TO wrinkle our noses at the gruesomeness of *Titus Andronicus* only labels us as hypocrites. Future historians are unlikely to be lenient with an age which talks so constantly of humanity but in which the national Sunday reading is an expert assessment of the latest coshings and stranglings, the young are nourished on slick films of sudden death, and no first-class carriage is complete without its old gentlemen immersed in the evisceration of a

baronet. We take our blood-bath more casually than the Elizabethans, but we take it just the same.

A roaring success in its own day, this play is now an extreme rarity on the stage, and we must be grateful to the Cambridge Marlowe Society for giving us the chance to see it in a production good enough to let us fairly judge its merits. A programme note explained that an effort had been made "by generous cutting to show how the horror and sadism that have been the object of so much criticism are balanced by humanity and retribution." Retribution there certainly is, in recurrently fatal doses that leave the stage piled high with victims.

Humanity is harder to seek; several characters show varying signs of decency, but the total impression, a powerful one, is of jet-black villainy and gloom. It is difficult to believe the young Shakespeare hadn't his tongue at least slightly in his cheek; and Professor Dover Wilson's theory that the play may be a burlesque is attractive. One can imagine SHAKESPEARE, having equalled his most spectacular contemporaries in rape and slaughter, rubbing his hands at drawing right

actors who struck a remarkably high standard. If Professor Dover Wilson is right, the Rose may have rung with laughter. Anonymity prevails at Cambridge, so I cannot tell you who it was who gave admirable performances as *Marcus*, *Titus*, *Aaron*, *Lucius* and *Lavinia*, to mention no others—except the *Clown*, who in his brief appearance seemed to me to have something of the strange inner calm of Mr. Richard Burton. Seeing the play again would be like going twice to the Paris morgue, but I am very glad to have put it into my collector's bag.

The second item on the same bill was also an Elizabethan rarity, though with far less reason. *The Honourable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* is a delicious piece of nonsense that comes—after *Titus*—like a burst of sunshine in a dank cavern. It, too, may have been a satire, for the rag of the Oxford witch-doctors gets pretty near to *Faustus*. ROBERT GREENE went to both universities, and so cannot be accused of bias, but from the evidence I think we can presume that Cambridge was his favourite.



Titus Andronicus, a noble Roman
Marcus Andronicus, Tribune of the People

away from them with cannibalism (the pasty, by the way, in which *Tamora* unwittingly eats her sons was made to rhyme with "hasty," for which the Arts Theatre would probably have been burned down if it were in Cornwall.)

There is scarcely any poetry, but a good deal of blunt dramatic effect, of which this production lost little. It made intelligent use of a simple set on different levels to group its teeming cast, and although some of the darkest moments became unbearably funny, that was not the fault of

Nothing is taken seriously in this witty and charming play, not even love. Its frolics were handled lightly by the Marlowe Society, and there were wildly comic scenes in which *Friar Bacon*, who possessed the enviable power of juggling cats into costermongers, played first-rate supernatural tricks to the consternation of the Hapsburg champion, a bungling amateur who could do nothing more startling than call up a rather sullen *Hercules*. Whoever played the *Friar* had the blessed quality of being funny before he spoke; his sketch of

a smugly eccentric don was a little masterpiece. The play has a secondary claim to fame in its early references to TV, with a primitive form of which the Friar's study is furnished. "Sit still, and keep the crystal in your eye" remains sound advice to viewers.

Recommended

Rattigan's *The Deep Blue Sea* (Duchess) is still the best play in London. A star cast makes more than it deserves of Wilde's *A Woman of No Importance* (Savoy), now shrewdly revised.

ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

Moulin Rouge—Street Corner

ONE can find fault with *Moulin Rouge* (Director: JOHN HUSTON) but I'm quite sure that in my experience there has been nothing to touch it visually. Every few seconds the screen frames some new brilliance; a picture imaginatively designed, attractively composed, full of vivid or subtly subdued colour, delightful, keenly satisfying and momentary.

There are sequences that measure up in all particulars to the visual excellence of the whole thing—notably the opening one, which plunges us into a night in the Moulin Rouge in 1890, with a group of performers in a whirl of deafening energy on the floor and the lively crowds all round watching under the dazzle and the smoke: this is classically good, not least in the way it uses contrast as we go in to the noise from the quiet, dark street with its gentle nineteenth-century sounds. The main unsatisfactory point about the film is its "story," which is founded on the customary assumption that the only way to make a celebrated personage interesting is to involve him with two girls of contrasting temperament. This celebrated personage, Toulouse-Lautrec, even that fine actor JOSÉ FERRER is not able to make properly convincing.

It's a pity that there was so much publicity about the precise mechanics of his appearance as a crippled dwarf; the result is that half the audience is not disposed to take much interest in any other aspect of the character—or indeed of the film. But a more serious trouble is that the chance for Mr. FERRER is not really there. We understand that Lautrec is an embittered cripple, we constantly look over his shoulder as he sketches, we watch him with the two young women, we hear him talking often undistinguished rhetoric or imitation Wilde: but the opportunities for Mr. FERRER to give the character any depth or humanity hardly exist.

It may be unreasonable to demand them; the piece is honestly called *Moulin Rouge*, and Lautrec is simply one of the more striking habitués of the place, chosen for some emphasis as the symbol and recorder of the style and period. What is quite certain is that even as a visual experience alone the film is not to be

given some of the flattest lines ever to come under that heading, and gets loud laughter for all of them. The best of the picture is in its bit parts: CHARLES VICTOR as an old worried jeweller, and many others who appear only in one fleeting scene. For a climax there is the usual chase, but they wouldn't go so far as to allow a



Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec—JOSÉ FERRER

[Moulin Rouge]

missed. Between them the director, the art director (PAUL SHERIFF), the photographer (OSWALD MORRIS) and the "special colour consultant" (ELIOT ELISOFAN) have done wonderful things, on every scale from the spectacular crowd scene down to such a beautiful little detail-shot as that of the painter's work-table with his brushes and pots of colour. The idea that a third dimension could add anything valuable to a film like this is lunatic.

Street Corner (Director: MURIEL Box) is the obvious, even laughably obvious result of setting out to produce an equivalent of *The Blue Lamp* with policewomen instead of policemen. The trouble—if one admits that there is any aesthetic justification for that, which is questionable—is that there is no real narrative shape about this one. They've just taken a group of alleged policewomen (tiresomely chatty and all-girls-together when we see them off duty) and given each of them a different representative example of the kind of thing policewomen have to deal with.

A succession of human problems, the synopsis calls it; in other words, a scrap-heap of incidents, linked only by the fact that in each the law is represented by one or more policewomen from the Chelsea station, which is a report centre for the whole lot (comic relief from the station sergeant, who is

policewoman to make the capture. Not a policewoman—a police dog; just as original.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The newest ones in London are not anything special. *Desperate Moment* is quite a good melodrama. At the Empire are showing what are described as M.G.M.'s first 3-D "Metropix," which prove to be the old red-and-green curiosities of a kind I first saw, I believe, not less than twenty-five years ago. The best things are still foreign: *The Secret Game* or *Les Jeux Interdits* (14/1/53) and *Le Plaisir* (18/2/53).

Top release is *Come Back, Little Sheba* (18/3/53), with that wonderful performance by Shirley Booth. *Above and Beyond* (4/3/53) is the story of the pilot of the first atom-bomb plane: absorbing, but overloaded with domesticity. *Ruby Gentry* (28/1/53) is an "exploitation picture" about a fatal North Carolina beauty, full of calculated sensationalism but not at all badly done.

RICHARD MALLETT

AT THE OPERA

SHOULD Shakespeare's plays be set to music? What does Juliet, cooling her fevered brow on the moonlit balcony, gain from an incessant sea of extraneous sound? Your good musician will surely cavil

at the sound of so much Shakespeare; and to your good Shakespearean the music can only be a nuisance.

But your good plain opera-goer, who gets married to Mendelssohn, buried to Chopin and sings the *Miserere* on a fine spring morning, will find much to please him in SUTERMEISTER's exasperating *Romeo and Juliet*, which is being given for the first time in this country, at Sadler's Wells—the more exasperating because there's so much good in the worst of it.

There is, for instance, the vigorously orchestrated score, at its best in the street brawls and when it is jig-jogging it in the ballroom. There the music rings through the house with such a neo-Elizabethan sturdiness that almost we might have dropped in for an evening at *Kiss Me, Juliet*. But this proved to be the composer's sole concession to the spirit of the times.

Soon it became apparent that his heart was really in the fightin' and the feudin'—the external pivots of Shakespeare's plot. But the tragedie's true centre—the flood of tenderness and passion that sweeps the two young lovers to their doom, left him as cold as he left us. We were politely interested—not deeply implicated.

A friend once had the great good fortune to sit behind two elderly ladies at the matinée of a try-out of *Hamlet*. Sensible women in stout shoes, they were the obvious casting for everybody's aunts, and they were seeing the piece for the first time. When *Ophelia* entered upon her mad scene, dripping shepherd's fennel (or whatever the noxious weed is called) from every lock, one good lady

From PUNCH, March 26, 1853



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Servant. "Oh, then, if you please 'm, I should like to leave this day month." *[Exit Idiot]*

turned to the other: "Oh, dear," she said, "I'm afraid that girl is going to be tiresome."

No sooner did we clap eyes on the star-crossed lovers of Sadler's Wells than we, too, had our misgivings. Our opera-going may have taught us that it, more than any of its sister arts, calls for the willing suspension of our disbelief, but on this occasion we found it impossible to accept Mr. ROWLAND JONES's *Romeo* as romantic, noble, or of the fourteenth century. He sang his music soundly, but his presence lacked distinction. And though Miss VICTORIA ELLIOTT gave all her *Is* and *ts* to *Juliet*, and

also endowed her with the very lovely notes in her top register, her appearance, too, was against her, for her bearing was perpetually one of apology, not ecstasy. Moreover she received us, in the ballroom scene, in a gown of so inky a hue that from the very outset her *Juliet* was under a cloud.

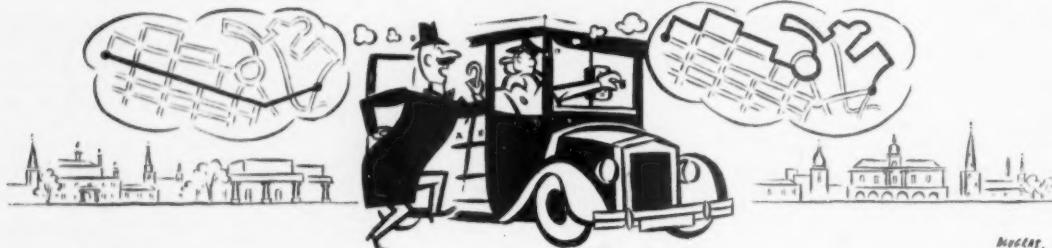
And so the unequal performance went on. No sooner were we enchanted by the magical off-stage echo of *Juliet's* voice, high in the unseen dome, when we were deeply angered by an octet of masquers who had clearly grabbed the Queen Mab speech from *Mercurio* and had now got down to smashing it. Were we beguiled by a two-part triumph of trumpets, it was only to be dashed where most we looked to be exalted—in those scenes between the lovers that lie at the heart of the play and are the mainspring of its poetry.

As to the production, there are two schools of thought on the way to stage an opera. One is for giving us something to look at, presumably to take the weight off our ears. The other holds that opera is to be heard but not seen. Mr. GEORGE DEVINE, a producer who comes to us hot from Stratford-upon-Avon, whether for good or ill, keeps his cauldron stirring like a good cook or a bad witch, according to taste. Yet Mr. MALCOLM PRIDE's *Verona* was heavy, stale, flat and non-profit-making.

The star of the evening was undoubtedly the conductor, Mr. JAMES ROBERTSON, who persuaded his orchestra that they were playing a masterpiece.

They were not.

CARYL BRAHMS



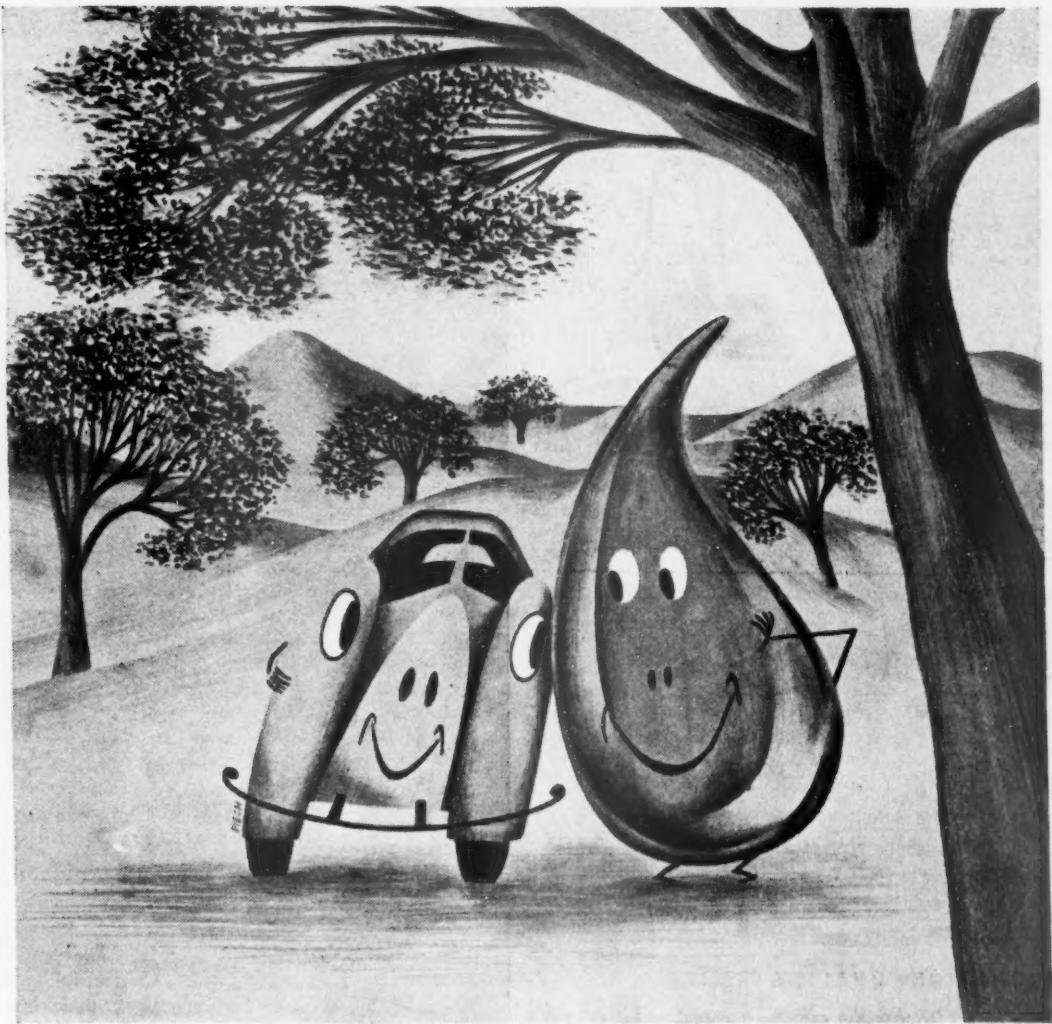
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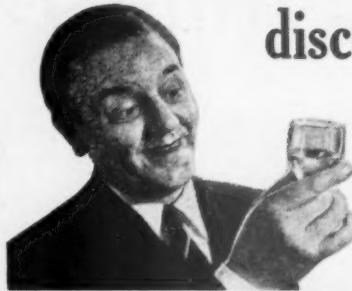
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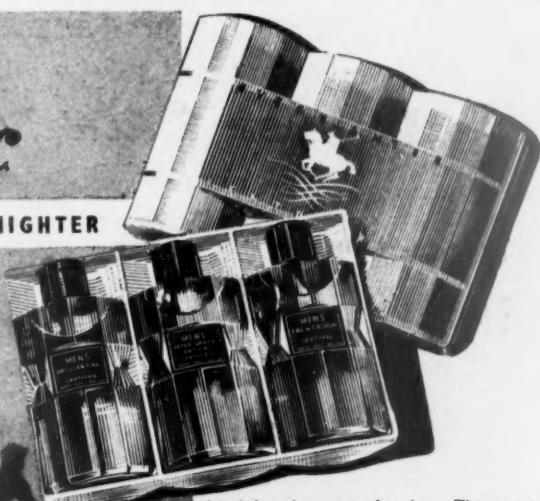
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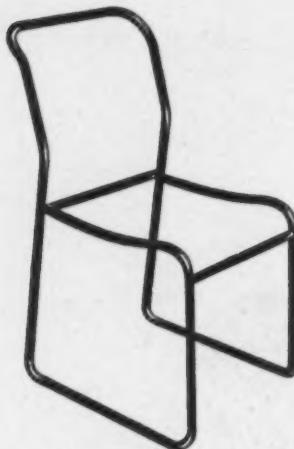
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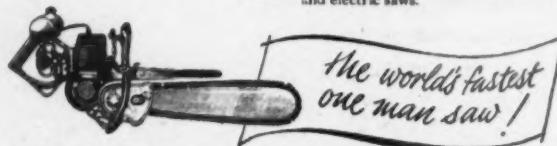
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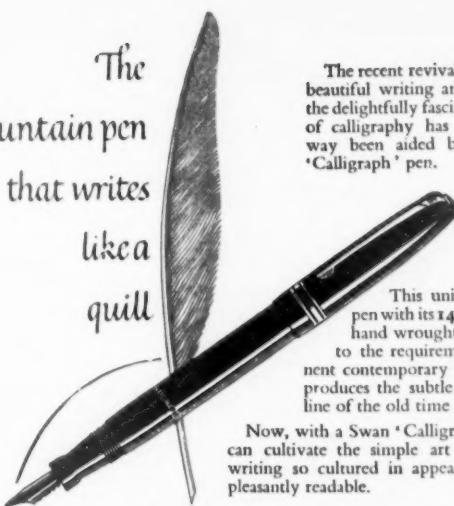


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